"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

LATE EDITION

Today, sunny, humid, a shower, high 82. **Tonight,** an evening thunderstorm, showers late, low 68. **Tomorrow,** a shower, a thunderstorm, high 76. Weather map is on Page B8.

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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 — $4.00

SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Neighbors helping search for Mohamed Abarada's daughter on Monday in Douar Tnirt, Morocco, in the Atlas Mountains. Friday's quake has killed at least 2,862.

CHINA USES A.I. TO SPREAD LIES ABOUT U.S. FIRE

MAUI DISINFORMATION

Covert Campaign Shows Rapid Shift in Tactics Against the West

By DAVID E. SANGER and STEVEN LEE MYERS

When wildfires swept across Maui last month with destructive fury, China's increasingly resourceful information warriors pounced.

The disaster was not natural, they said in a flurry of false posts that spread across the internet, but was the result of a secret "weather weapon" being tested by the United States. To bolster the plausibility, the posts carried photographs that appeared to have been generated by artificial intelligence programs, making them among the first to use these new tools to bolster the aura of authenticity of a disinformation campaign.

For China — which largely stood on the sidelines of the 2016 and 2020 U.S. presidential elections while Russia ran hacking operations and disinformation campaigns — the effort to cast the wildfires as a deliberate act by American intelligence agencies and the military was a rapid change of tactics.

Until now, China's influence campaigns have been focused on amplifying propaganda defending its policies on Taiwan and other subjects. The most recent effort, revealed by researchers from Microsoft and a range of other organizations, suggests that Beijing is making more direct attempts to sow discord in the United States.

The effort also comes as the Biden administration and Congress are grappling with how to push back on China without tipping the two countries into open conflict, and with how to reduce the risk that A.I. is used to magnify disinformation.

The impact of the Chinese campaign — identified by researchers from Microsoft, Recorded Future, the RAND Corporation, NewsGuard and the University of Maryland — is difficult to measure, though early indications suggest that few social media users engaged with the most outlandish of the conspiracy theories.

Brad Smith, the vice chairman and president of Microsoft, whose researchers analyzed the covert campaign, sharply criticized China for exploiting a natural disaster for political gain.

"I just don't think that's worthy of any country, much less any country that aspires to be a great country," Mr. Smith said in an interview on Monday.

China was not the only country to make political use of the Maui fires. Russia did as well, spreading posts that emphasized how much money the United States was spending on the war in Ukraine and that suggested the cash would be better spent at home for disaster relief.

The researchers suggested that China was building a network of accounts that could be put to use

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Michelin Stars Bring Prestige, But at a Cost

By JULIA MOSKIN

When the chef Caroline Glover heard in June that Michelin would be publishing a restaurant guide to Colorado, she was thrilled at first.

"I've seen Michelin move across the country, but never thought Colorado would be next," said Ms. Glover, who co-owns the restaurant Annette, in Aurora.

One of the state's culinary leaders, she was named best chef in the Mountain region last year by the James Beard Foundation. Her restaurant is a fixture on best-of-Denver lists.

Colorado's stars will be revealed on Tuesday at a gala event in Denver, and speculation has been frenzied. But one thing is certain: No one from Michelin has inspected Ms. Glover's restaurant, and she will not be getting any stars. That's because Annette is about 500 feet past the city limit that divides Denver and Aurora. And while the Denver tourism board paid Michelin to be included, its counterpart in Aurora did not.

The Michelin Guide, owned by the French tire manufacturer, is the world's most widely recognized authority on fine dining. Its stars have fueled the dreams of generations of chefs, and are always the first thing mentioned about restaurants that have them. In recent years, with competition from the World's 50 Best Restaurants list and other awards, the

Continued on Page A21

Spotting Wildfires With a Sharp (Human) Lens

Cameras and Satellites May Replace People, but Not Just Yet

By RAYMOND ZHONG

FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST, Mont. — If, on a hot, dry day a fire should break out within a certain 300,000-acre patch of northwest Montana, in an expanse of backcountry between the crest of the Whitefish Range and the glacier-carved peaks that hug the Continental Divide, there's a good chance Leif Haugen will be the first person on Earth to see it.

For the better part of an hour, he might be the only person.

Mr. Haugen has worked for more than half of his 52 years as a fire lookout, scanning the larch and pine wilderness from a one-room mountaintop cabin. Alone most of the time but for his thoughts, his mutt, Ollie, and the occasional crackle of voices on the radio, he is part of a nationwide band of professional watchers who, like lighthouse keepers, stand solitary guard between civilization and nature's whims.

More and more, he stands at another divide, too: between human jobs and automation. As land managers seek new tools to deal with the threat of catastrophic wildfires, which is rising in the West as the planet warms and Americans build more homes near overgrown forests and other vulnerable places, the days of lookouts might be numbered.

The chief of the U.S. Forest Service, Randy Moore, told lawmakers in March that the agency was moving away from humans in watchtowers. The future of fire detection, he said, is cameras. "We need to lean much further into the technology arena," he said.

A spokesman, Scott Owen, declined to say whether the Forest Service had specific plans for

Continued on Page A18

MARK FELIX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Leif Haugen and his dog, Ollie, man Thoma Lookout, elevation 7,104 feet, in northwest Montana.

Daughter Lost, A Father Digs In Desperation

*This article is by **Vivian Yee, Aida Alami** and **Yassine Oulhiq**.*

DOUAR TNIRT, Morocco — When the earth seized his house and shook it late Friday night, Mohamed Abarada ran outside with his 9-month-old daughter in his arms. His mother, his wife and his 9-year-old daughter were still inside, trapped.

Mr. Abarada started digging with his bare hands. He dug by day with the help of neighbors and relatives, and by night with the flashlight on his phone.

The two older women were pulled out lifeless, joining the roster of the dead in Douar Tnirt, a village of a few hundred people a long way along a narrow winding road high in the Atlas Mountains.

But on Monday, his daughter Chaima had yet to be found.

With Mr. Abarada's shoulder injured, his fellow searchers urged him to rest while they kept sifting through what had been his house — broken bricks mingled with broken wood, bamboo roofing, couch cushions, a satellite dish and teakettles, all the flotsam of family life. He ignored them. He had an exact idea of where Chaima had been — on the stairs, trying to flee — and he and the others worked at the hole they had made with shovels, picks and their bare, untrained hands.

All Monday they worked as the sun poured down, Mr. Abarada, his brothers and other neighbors.

Continued on Page A6

Virginia a 'Test Case' for Voter Priorities in 2024

Youngkin Seeks G.O.P. Takeover This Fall

By TRIP GABRIEL

PRINCE GEORGE, Va. — Virginia, whose off-year elections are usually closely watched as an indicator of the national mood, has been mostly out of the spotlight this year, overshadowed by the Republican presidential primary and the looming general election clash.

But with every seat in the Legislature up in eight weeks, the stakes are unusually high, with Republicans in position to swing the entire state, just four years after Democrats did the same. The effort, led by Gov. Glenn Youngkin, a popular Republican with national ambitions, is likely to serve as an early read on the politics of 2024, spinning out lessons for both parties, especially on abortion.

Democrats have made abortion rights their top issue, warning that if Republicans win full control of the General Assembly, Virginia will join other Southern states by sharply restricting abortion access.

A winning night for Democrats on Nov. 7, however, will show that

Continued on Page A17

Likening Google's Antitrust Trial to Microsoft's

Similar Legal Theory Faces Key Differences

By STEVE LOHR

The Justice Department argues in a federal antitrust suit that Google is a dominant tech company that has abused its market power to bully industry partners, protect its monopoly and thwart competition.

That has a familiar ring. As U.S. et al. v. Google goes to trial this week, the echoes of the landmark federal suit against Microsoft, a quarter-century ago, are unmistakable. In the Google case, as with Microsoft then, a tech giant is accused of using its overwhelming market power to unfairly cut competitors off from potential customers.

But on the eve of the Google trial, it seems unimaginable that the case could command the widespread attention that the Microsoft proceedings did. Microsoft in the late 1990s was a singular tech titan and its leader, Bill Gates, was a national icon.

The Microsoft trial, which began in October 1998, spanned 76 days of testimony over more than eight months. Every major news

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Somber Remembrance
Relatives of those who died on 9/11 went to ground zero on the 22nd anniversary of the attack. PAGE A21

New Account of Assassination
Paul Landis, one of the Secret Service agents near John F. Kennedy when he was shot, is speaking out. PAGE A14

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Floods Ravage Eastern Libya
Hundreds were dead and thousands missing after water swept away entire neighborhoods. PAGE A10

Biden's Vietnam Pragmatism
While others of his generation were scarred by the conflict, the president forged a strategic partnership on his first visit to the country. PAGE A8

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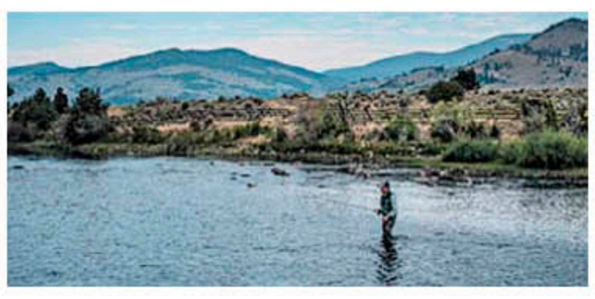
Take a Hike With an Author
The best-selling writer Lauren Groff has a physicality about her that is central to how she lives and writes. PAGE C1



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Plummeting numbers of rainbow and brown species create uncertainty for fly fishing's future in the state. PAGE D1

He Couldn't Resist the Titanic
The diver Paul-Henri Nargeolet mixed decades of passion for the ship with repeated risky dives. PAGE D1

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IPhone Limits in China
Reports of broader restrictions on government officials' use of the phone have unnerved Apple's investors, lowering its stock price and heightening geopolitical tensions. PAGE B1

TikTok Shop Is Rolling Out
The company now offers American users the ability to buy products from the app itself, motivating shoppers with discounts and coupons as it introduces a major new revenue stream. PAGE B1

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Paul Krugman PAGE A23

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Where Court Meets Ring
Jamal Murray, above, an N.B.A. champion, has learned to relax thanks to a friendship with a U.F.C. titlist, Alexander Volkanovski. PAGE B6

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The Newspaper and Beyond

TODAY'S PAPER

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VIDEO Near the epicenter of Friday's earthquake in Morocco, residents told The Times that emergency workers had been slow to reach them or never arrived. *nytimes.com/video*

NEWSLETTER In The Recommendation, the staff at Wirecutter sends you a roundup of product reviews, shopping advice and researched deals. Sign up to receive it every weekday at *nytimes.com/newsletters*.

QUIZ Flashback, a history quiz from The Times, asks you to place eight notable events in chronological order. This week's quiz tests your knowledge of the Burning Man festival, the Americans With Disabilities Act and a Habsburg-era scare. *nytimes.com/upshot*

Quote of the Day

"The train has left the station. We're all in. Stop talking. He's not going anywhere. It's time for all of us to get on the train and buck up."

GAVIN NEWSOM, *governor of California, who denied he would run for president and directed Democrats to rally around President Biden. Page A16.*

The Story Behind the Story

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Michelle Brennen, center, organized a meeting between family members and friends of those who died in a plane crash in Boston in 1973.

50 Years After Tragedy, Finding Connection

In 1973, a plane crash in Boston killed 89 people. Sharing in their grief led some loved ones to solace.

By EMMETT LINDNER

In February 2021, Ellen Barry, a Boston-based reporter who covers mental health for The New York Times, came across an article in Seven Days, a Vermont weekly newspaper, that piqued her interest. The piece focused on Michelle Brennen, who was 10 years old when her father died in a plane crash that had occurred nearly 50 years earlier. On a foggy day in 1973, Delta Flight 723 collided into a sea wall that separated Boston Harbor from Logan International Airport, killing all 89 people on board. Ms. Brennen, the article reported, was searching for family members of those who had died; she wanted to bring them together for a memorial.

The human, tangible qualities of the story resonated with Ms. Barry. So soon after she finished reading the article, she sent Ms. Brennen an email. She followed that up with a trip to Vermont, where the two drank coffee and talked for about two hours. Her article, on Ms. Brennen's mission and the long course of grief after tragedy, was published in The Times last week.

Here, Ms. Barry shared how she approached people to discuss loss and the role memory played in her reporting. This interview has been edited and condensed.

How did you structure the article?

When I first came across the story, Michelle was just starting to look for families. I thought, Wouldn't it be good to tag along as she goes on this quest? She tracked down these people with whom she has one thing in common: All of their lives were shaped by the loss of someone on that plane.

The structure of the article was the structure of her search. I wanted to bring the reader to the end of the search, when Michelle was able to bring people together for a gathering in Boston this summer. But of course I didn't know whether anything meaningful would take place when they got together. That felt like a risk.

Michelle Brennen reads newspaper clippings about the plane crash that killed her father.

How do you assess the veracity of memory?

For the purposes of this story, I was looking at memories of subjective experience, the experience of loss and how it affected families. You really have nothing to work with except for the memories of the people that you're writing about. I fall back on trusting their memories and the emotions that are connected to them.

That feels embodied by a man who said he didn't cry when he lost his mother as a child.

That particular line is something the editors and I discussed a lot, because all of us found it hard to wrap our heads around. I went back to him several times to talk about it, and really only after considerable discussion did we include that line. There's an emotional truth about the story that he was telling us; it would, I think, remain true even if he did cry at some point.

The way he was raised, he believed that expressing deep emotion about his mother's death was going to be a burden on the people around him. It's hard to explain how consistent and pervasive that thought was for those interviewed. There were so many similarities, perhaps because the families were mostly New Englanders. They would talk about the environment they grew up in and the way they dealt with emotion. It underlined how much our culture has changed.

In 2021, Ms. Brennen found a box her mother kept with documents related to the crash, which helped prompt her desire to track down other family members of victims. The box was an organic metaphor for stashing away, and revisiting, painful memories.

In some ways I was questioning whether Michelle was going to be able to provide a feeling of resolution, which was what she wanted to bring to people. It seemed to me that there would be a lot of people for whom revisiting this would be too painful. Was she going to be able to make this a positive experience? That was my question from the beginning.

There is still tension around that; I quoted some people who were very unsettled. But in the end, I think the people who showed up in Boston walked away with something of value, the sense of being part of some collective and of not being alone in this loss.

Was approaching the families difficult?

All you can ever do is ask. This is very painful material. You're not going to persuade them to speak about it unless they have a reason to. Quite a few people didn't want to talk about it. Michelle, for her part, really never wavered in the thought that connecting all these people would be good for most of them, if not all of them.

Did their stories change or add anything to the way you think about mental health?

There are big questions right now about how to help people get past terrible experiences and whether various kinds of medical treatment are necessary.

A lot of people are getting new diagnoses regarding their trauma, and engaging in the various kinds of treatments, like eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy, or E.M.D.R., that help them better cope with the memory. That's something that seems very alive in our culture.

Prolonged grief syndrome, a diagnosis that was recently added to the manual psychiatrists use to treat patients, proposes that there is a pathological level of grief that should be and can be treated by professionals. It's kind of a new conversation because we've tended to look at grief as a necessary, or unavoidable, kind of suffering.

Today's Top Trending Headlines

Opinion | Trump Is Really Old, Too Voters are concerned with President Biden's age, 80. Frank Bruni, a contributing writer to Times Opinion, reminds readers that the front-runner for the 2024 Republican nomination, former President Donald J. Trump, at 77, is already as old as Ronald Reagan was at the end of his presidency.

Ashton Kutcher and Mila Kunis Address Leniency Letters In Danny Masterson Rape Case The actor Danny Masterson was sentenced to 30 years to life on Thursday after a jury found him guilty of raping two women. Ashton Kutcher and Mila Kunis, two of Mr. Masterson's co-stars on "That '70s Show," wrote character letters, a common plea for leniency in sentencing, to the judge who heard his case. They explained why they did so in a video statement on Saturday.

How Soaring Child Care Costs Are Crushing New Yorkers More than half of families in New York City cannot afford child care, which federal standards suggest should cost no more than 7 percent of household income. That's one big reason parents with young kids are moving away, setting up a looming crisis in the city. Times reporters spoke with dozens of families in the city.

As Smartphone Industry Sputters, the iPhone Expands Its Dominance Most trailblazing consumer products lose ground to rivals. But Apple, which is set to release its 17th version of the iPhone on Tuesday, has increased its share of smartphone sales. The Times's Tripp Mickle reported how the company is defying gravity.

A Headline From History

FRENCH COUNT IS SLAIN; WIDOW IS ARRESTED

September 12, 1924. The last male descendant of one of the oldest noble houses of Brittany met a rather ignoble end — likely at the hands of his jilted wife, The Times reported. The Countess Laroux de Keranon had been arrested at the family chateau in Lannion, France, and charged with murdering her husband, Count Roger Laroux de Keranon, about one week after he succumbed to three bullet wounds. The countess, previously Louise Suzanne Theola Fleury, first reported the injuries as an accident and then as a suicide attempt, but her claims were reinvestigated after an anonymous "sweetheart" of the count's came forward with his deathbed confession, according to The Times. She had been sworn to secrecy, she told the police, but no longer felt compelled to silence.

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Facts of Interest

The worst shutout loss in N.F.L. regular season history came in 1934, when the Cincinnati Reds lost to the Philadelphia Eagles, 64-0. The Reds were kicked out of the league after that game and never played again.

Giants' Opener: 'It Was a Bad Game' B9

Google has amassed 90 percent of the search engine market in the United States and 91 percent globally, according to Similarweb, a data analysis firm.

Why the Justice Dept. Is Suing The Search Engine Giant A15

Twenty years ago, fishery biologists were counting about 3,000 fish per mile along the Big Hole River in Montana. That number has since dropped to hundreds in some stretches.

'Zombie Trout' Unsettle Montana D1

During New York City's fiscal crisis in 1975, the city came so close to bankruptcy that a declaration was signed in advance by Mayor Abraham D. Beame.

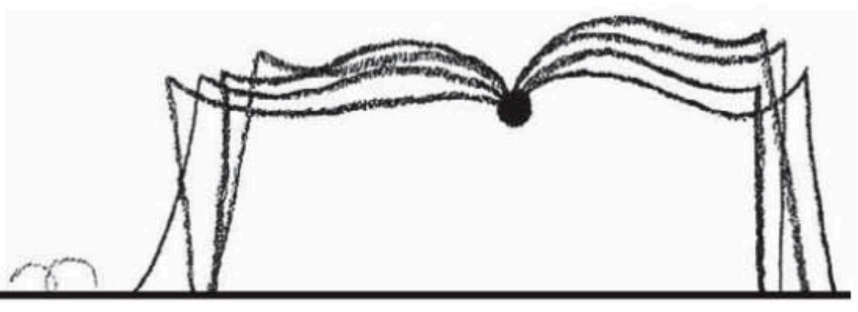
Revisiting New York on the Edge Of Ruin C1

So far, scientists have identified 17 types of elementary particles that make up the physical universe, and at least four ways they interact: through gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear forces.

The Universe's Unpredictability D3

According to the Uniformed Firefighters Association, 341 firefighters, paramedics and other Fire Department employees have died from cancers and other illnesses linked to the toxic dust at ground zero resulting from the Sept. 11 attacks.

22 Years On, Mourners at Ground Zero Honor Victims of 9/11 Terror Attacks A21



CHARLOTTE DUMORTIER

Reader Corner

Callout: Did you try to get an abortion recently?

The Times has been covering the changes to abortion access across the country since the overturning of Roe v. Wade in June 2022. New research from the Guttmacher Institute indicates that legal abortions likely rose in the first six months of this year compared to 2020 (increasing from about 465,000 nationwide to about 511,000 in states where the procedure is legal). Thousands of women have likely crossed state lines in pursuit of an abortion when facing restrictions at home.

The Times is looking to speak with people in the United States who have had an abortion in the past year, or were unable to obtain one. Are you willing to share a brief description of your experience and potentially speak with a reporter in a follow-up call? In which state do you reside, and did you need to travel in search of a doctor or facility?

To share your experience, fill out our form at nytimes.com/readercenter. We respect your privacy and will not publish any part of your submission without contacting you first.

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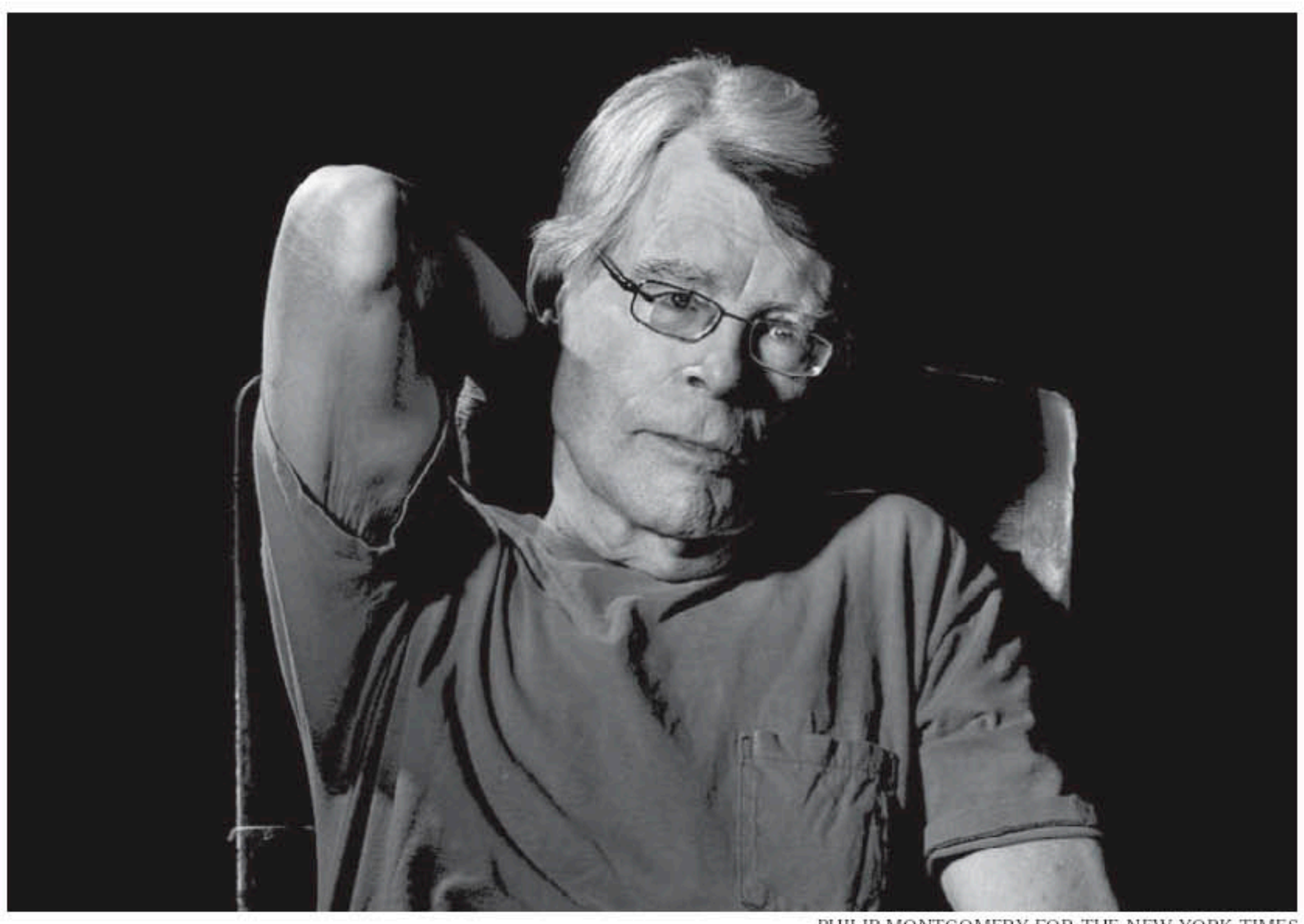
Excerpts From New York Times Audio



PHILIP MONTGOMERY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"Holly," Stephen King's new thriller, centers on the fictional Holly Gibney, a private investigator.

Stephen King's new novel, "Holly," is his sixth book to feature the private investigator Holly Gibney, who made her debut as a mousy side character in the 2014 novel "Mr. Mercedes" and has become more complicated with each subsequent appearance. Mr. King appeared on "The Book Review Podcast" last week to tell the host Gilbert Cruz about his new book and his thoughts on writing. Here's an edited excerpt from their conversation.

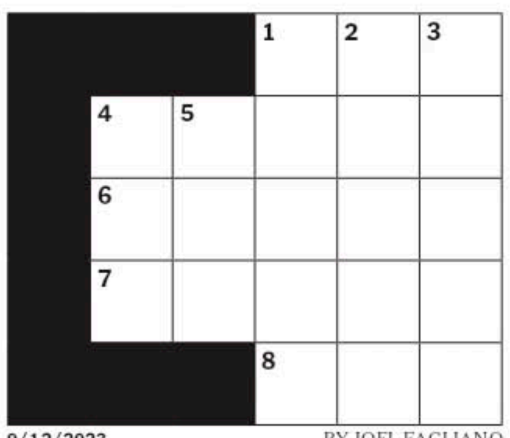
You've said many times that you don't really know the ending of a book when you start it. I'm curious how you square that with the writing of crime novels, suspense novels, mystery stories, on which there is historically an overemphasis on plot.

I'm not interested in the mystery so much as I am in the suspense element of the story. Alfred Hitchcock said, if a bomb explodes where people are having a meeting, you have 5 seconds of horror. But if you know the bomb is under the table, and they don't, then you have 10 minutes of suspense — hopefully, excruciating suspense. And he was the master of that. I like that kind of story.

But I will say that with "Holly," there were plot elements involved that drove me absolutely crazy. I'm working on a novel now called "We Think Not," which features Holly Gibney, probably not in a starring role, but she's very much an important character. And that novel is so plotted that I just want to scream. I like situations. I don't necessarily like plot, and they're very different.

Listen to the full conversation with Stephen King at nytimes.com/tbrpodcast.

The Mini Crossword



9/12/2023 BY JOEL FAGLIANO

ACROSS

1 Caspian or Caribbean
4 Cried like a crow
6 Cup for a competition champion, e.g.
7 Casual cloth
8 Catch, as a cue

DOWN

1 Cobs and cygnets
2 Creepy
3 Connection request on social media
4 Crude dude
5 Completely impress

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

J	A	M		
A	L	O	O	F
W	O	N	K	A
S	T	E	R	N
		T	A	G

Here to Help

A Recipe for Broiled Turmeric Salmon With Corn and Green Beans

This meal marries charred flavors with bright vegetables, and no grill is required. Broiling salmon skin side up creates crispy skin without drying out the delicate flesh. Alongside your salmon, blister green beans and corn, then toss them with lime juice, raw corn and red onion for a balance of crunchy and tender, sweet and scorched. Turmeric and red-pepper flakes bring earthiness alongside the sweetness of the fish, corn and green beans, but garam masala, cumin or jerk seasoning would also work well. **ALI SLAGLE**

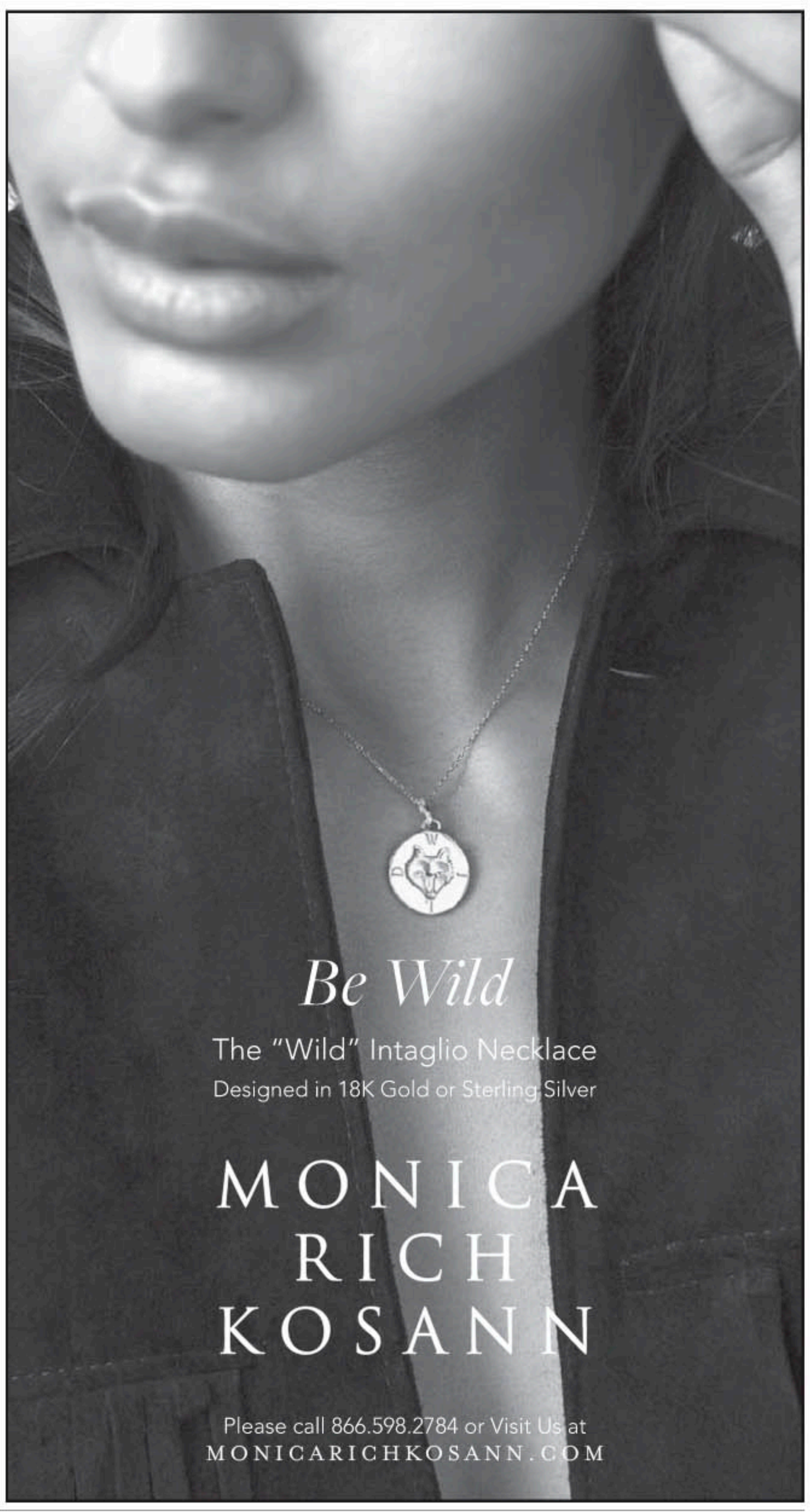
TIME: 20 MINUTES
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon red-pepper flakes
- 4 (6- to 8-ounce) skin-on salmon fillets, patted dry
- Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)
- 1 pound green beans, stem end trimmed and beans halved crosswise
- Kernels from 4 ears of corn (about 4 cups)
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons lime juice (from 2 limes)

1. Heat the broiler to high and set a rack in the upper third in the oven. In a medium bowl, stir to combine 2 tablespoons oil with the turmeric and red-pepper flakes. Season the salmon all over with 1 teaspoon salt, then toss to coat in the spiced oil.
2. On a sheet pan, toss the green beans, half the corn kernels, 1 tablespoon olive oil and a sprinkle of salt. Spread into an even layer, then nestle the salmon among the vegetables, skin side up.
3. Broil until the green beans are blistered and charred in spots, and the salmon's skin is crisp and the flesh is opaque and flakes easily with a fork, 6 to 10 minutes. Halfway through broiling, check the vegetables; if any are burning, give them a stir so they're no longer in direct contact with the broiler.
4. In a large bowl, stir together the remaining corn kernels, the red onion, lime juice and 1 teaspoon salt.
5. Transfer the salmon to a platter or plates, then scrape the charred vegetables into the bowl of raw corn and onion. Stir to combine and season to taste with salt. Spoon the vegetables alongside the salmon and drizzle everything with a little olive oil.

DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS

For more recipes, visit New York Times Cooking at nytcooking.com.



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'We live by hiding away from the police. It's a painful way of living, but I don't have a choice because that's how we hustle.'
MARY SOSA, a native of Malawi whose daughter was injured in the Johannesburg fire.

After Fire, Anti-Immigrant Backlash Intensifies in South Africa

By JOHN ELIGON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ILAN GODFREY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Yasini Kumbasa, a Malawi native, escaped the deadly fire in Johannesburg. He was later detained when he could not produce his passport, lost in the blaze.

Men mainly of Tanzanian descent signing up for help from a nonprofit group.

Fearing arrest, Ms. Sosa didn't get her child's burns treated at a public clinic.

JOHANNESBURG — Two days after escaping a roaring blaze by slithering down a curtain with his 15-month-old daughter strapped to his chest, and hours after burying two fellow Malawians who didn't survive, Yasini Kumbasa was stopped in downtown Johannesburg by police officers demanding to see his passport.

He'd lost just about everything in the fire, but the officers were unmoved when he tried to explain that his passport was destroyed. Accusing him of being in South Africa illegally, they locked him up and demanded at least 1,500 rand, or $78, about what he paid in rent each month, for his release, Mr. Kumbasa said.

After spending three nights in a downtown police station, Mr. Kumbasa, 29, said he got out with money his wife borrowed from a Malawian acquaintance.

As South Africans furiously debate the decades of failed government policy, overlooked warnings and ineffective leadership that led a derelict building occupied by hundreds of squatters to go up in flames on Aug. 31, immigrants again find themselves in the cross hairs and feeling more vulnerable, even as they carry the heaviest trauma from the blaze.

The authorities have not released the identities of the 77 confirmed dead, but interviews with residents of the building and aid groups suggest that most of the victims — most residents, in fact — were natives of other African countries.

Many of the immigrants who escaped the flames but lost loved ones have avoided government shelters and public hospitals, fearing that immigration officials might check their legal status and deport them if all their papers aren't in order.

Immigration stops and extortion attempts that immigrants say the police frequently carry out in Johannesburg have become even scarier, especially for those like Mr. Kumbasa who lost their passports in the conflagration.

Concerns are building as well about anti-immigrant rhetoric and violence.

With national elections looming next year, some politicians have seized on the tragedy to lash out at migrants, whom they blame for fueling a housing shortage and preventing officials from cleaning up squalid buildings. Some are calling for tighter border controls — potentially a winning message in a country where half of the population says that foreign nationals should not be allowed to work because they take jobs from citizens.

Facing extortion attempts while being blamed for a housing and job shortage.

As one of Africa's economic powerhouses, South Africa has long been a magnet for migrants from desperately poor countries throughout the continent's southern region. Yet after arriving, immigrants find themselves living a precarious existence, violently attacked at times and blamed for intractable problems like crime, joblessness and a housing crisis.

After the tragedy, officials with the Department of Home Affairs, which enforces immigration laws, were quick to show up at emergency shelters, as many of the survivors feared. But Johannesburg city officials said they were there only to help with missing documents, for both immigrants and citizens, not to deport people.

Colleen Makhubele, the speaker of the Johannesburg City Council, said the city was focused on addressing the immediate humanitarian crisis and was not seeking documentation from immigrants affected by the fire.

But, "we can't suspend the law forever," she said in an interview, suggesting that survivors who want proper documentation seek government help in getting it — even if that means returning to their native countries and applying for visas from there. For now, though, the shelter is the safest place for undocumented immigrants, she said.

"In the streets, we can't control who's going to pick them up," she said. "When the policeman comes, he just wants his documentation. If you don't have it, they don't care whether you jumped off a building or not. They'll just take them in."

Immigration enforcement has become a routine part of policing in South Africa. Though courts have rejected the practice of indiscriminately stopping people suspected of being in the country illegally, immigrants say that police officers regularly demand documentation from them on the streets.

Violence is another ever-present threat to migrants. In Diepsloot, a township north of Johannesburg, South African residents blamed a spate of violent crime last year on foreign citizens, and a Zimbabwean man was burned to death by an enraged mob.

In response, the law enforcement authorities launched broad immigration sweeps through the township. For several weeks, police officers, accompanied by Home Affairs officials, patrolled the streets, grabbing men at outdoor markets and other public venues, demanding to see their papers.

If they could not produce them, they were thrown into police vans and taken to jail. News outlets reported that officers sometimes asked people to say words in local languages to test whether they were South African.

Sultan, a native of Tanzania, said he had never experienced that sort of police action in a decade of living in South Africa — until this past week, after he escaped the deadly fire but lost his convenience store on the building's ground floor.

A few days later, he was going to get something to eat when two police officers asked for his passport.

Sultan, 43, who asked that his last name be withheld out of fear of further trouble, told them it had been destroyed in the fire, and they put him in the back of their van. They told him that if he paid them 1,500 rand, they would release him, he said, otherwise they would take him to a deportation center.

The officers drove around for several hours with him and other immigrants they arrested, he said. Eventually, Sultan was released after a friend brought the money to pay the officers.

Brigadier Brenda Muridili, a spokeswoman for the South African Police Service in Gauteng, the province that includes Johannesburg, said the department took "any allegation of corruption seriously." Police officials have received complaints of officers extorting foreign citizens, she said, but the challenge is that accusers often do not want to cooperate with police investigations.

Much of the attention on xenophobia in South Africa has focused on occasional violent outbursts against foreign-born residents. But in recent years, anti-immigrant sentiment has manifested itself in government policy and rhetoric. Officials have restricted some pathways to legal residence, moved to limit job opportunities for immigrants and ordered more aggressive measures to round up those who may be residing in the country illegally.

A provincial health official was captured on video last year berating a Zimbabwean woman at a hospital, accusing her of contributing to overwhelming the country's health system.

Several people injured in the fire hesitated to seek medical treatment, fearing contact with the authorities.

Twenty-two-month-old Happiness Mwanyali was badly burned along her right thigh as her mother, Mary Sosa, carried her on her back to escape the building. But Ms. Sosa, 36, from Malawi, hesitated to take her daughter to the public clinic where they are usually treated, because all of her immigration documents had been destroyed. Without those, she said, she feared the clinic might not serve her and that Home Affairs might come to deport them.

So the day after the fire, she tried a treatment friends had suggested: rubbing toothpaste on the wound.

Happiness, who has soft cheeks and curious eyes, eventually got medical care from a private clinic when a nonprofit organization intervened to help.

"As foreigners, we don't live freely," said Ms. Sosa, who has lived in South Africa for three years, and sells peanuts and bananas on the street. "We live by hiding away from the police. It's a painful way of living, but I don't have a choice because that's how we hustle."

That bargain, trading a bit of freedom to earn a living, is one that some immigrant survivors of the fire say they are reconsidering.

Even though Mr. Kumbasa said he did not make that much in the odd jobs he worked in South Africa, life here had been better than it was in Malawi, where he could not earn a living. But getting arrested, after losing so much in the fire, has shattered his sense of security in South Africa, he said.

It is time, he said, to move back to Malawi.

The scene of last month's fire, which killed at least 77 people, most of them natives of other African countries.

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Above, a man's destroyed house in the village of Douar Tnirt, Morocco. Top right, carrying away an injured woman who lost her husband in the quake. Above right, a shelter area for village residents.

Daughter Lost in Morocco's Earthquake, a Father Digs in Desperation

From Page A1

There were no emergency responders in sight, no officials, no one but them — and then no one but him. When the other villagers left for a lunch break, he stayed, tossing debris from the hole log by log, emptying it of broken stones basketful by basketful.

Roosters crowed, though there were only him and a few others to hear. A tiny kitten darted around his feet, mewing, and he clucked to it. Onlookers from outside the village passed by, snapping photos and shaking their heads, murmuring at the father's perseverance. He kept working, his green T-shirt increasingly brown with dust.

"Poor guy," said Fatema Benija, 32, whose house had faced Mr. Abarada's, and who was now spending her days in a van parked between the two piles of rubble. "For two days, nobody came to check on us. You have no idea what we went through. Hunger, cold."

And then a lament: "If only they had rescued people earlier."

It is nothing new for Douar Tnirt, villagers said. Medical care has long been far away, and even schooling is limited to one hour a day at the two-room primary school, the road there narrow and rocky.

The government, people said, seems barely to know they exist.

Then, about 4:45 p.m. on Monday, help, finally, appeared to be on the way. People in boots and helmets tramped up the path to the collapsed house. There were Moroccan government personnel and a Spanish search-and-rescue team, accompanied by a journalist for 2M, Morocco's state-owned broadcast channel.

Suddenly, Mr. Abarada's lonely patch of mud bricks looked like the earthquake-rescue scene that viewers all over the world are used to seeing. There was a human chain of volunteers in fluorescent vests blocking onlookers from the debris-strewn mountain, a trained dog to sniff out bodies, people in neat uniforms, looking grave and authoritative.

Mr. Abarada stood off to the side of the debris, in the space of a few seconds relegated to a bit player in his own drama.

But many of the gathering villagers had spent the previous three days on their own, rescuing the people they loved and the people they had grown up with, driving from Marrakesh and Casablanca and from all over the country to get home to help.

And some were furious.

"People came from all over — we buried people, we rescued people," screamed Omar Ouchahed, 53. "Say the truth: How many hours has it been?"

Two firefighters tried to calm him, pulling Mr. Ouchahed away as another officer directed the crowd to stand back and clear the site. He was having none of it.

"I've been working since Saturday morning," Mr. Ouchahed bellowed, "and now you're telling me to leave?"

A few minutes later, another man joined the outburst.

"There are people who took commercial flights from other countries and made it here before you," Mehdi Ait Belaid, 25, who rushed to the village from Marrakesh the night of the earthquake, shouted at an officer. "They're saying there were no roads, but it's not true. Even children were digging!"

He and others — some with only sandals and socks on their feet — had pulled out dozens of people, some alive, some dead, he said. When they called the police, he said, they told them the roads were blocked.

The only official presence in the village since the quake had been a couple of auxiliary officers who arrived on Saturday and left after recording the number of missing and dead.

Without ambulances, villagers carried someone six kilometers toward the nearest medical center before a passing driver agreed to help. That person died. But at least the villagers had tried.

"If we'd waited for the government, even people we managed to save we wouldn't have been able to save," Mr. Ait Belaid said.

Now, for the living, there was the matter of survival.

Hot as it was in the sun on Monday, the cold was coming, and rain — rain that would almost certainly turn the village into one giant mud slick — was forecast for later in the week. Snow often comes to the high mountains as early as September, and nobody in the village had so much as a proper tent.

Mr. Ait Belaid gestured at the reporter for the state broadcaster and his cameraman. "They saw 2M and started acting like they're working," he said, with disgust. "They're just performing for the TV."

Not long after, the 2M crew set up their shot in front of the rubble, the helmeted rescue team visible in the background. The journalist spoke to the camera about the plight of the village. Then the cameraman put down the camera, the journalist snapped a photo with members of the rescue crew, and every single uniformed person left.

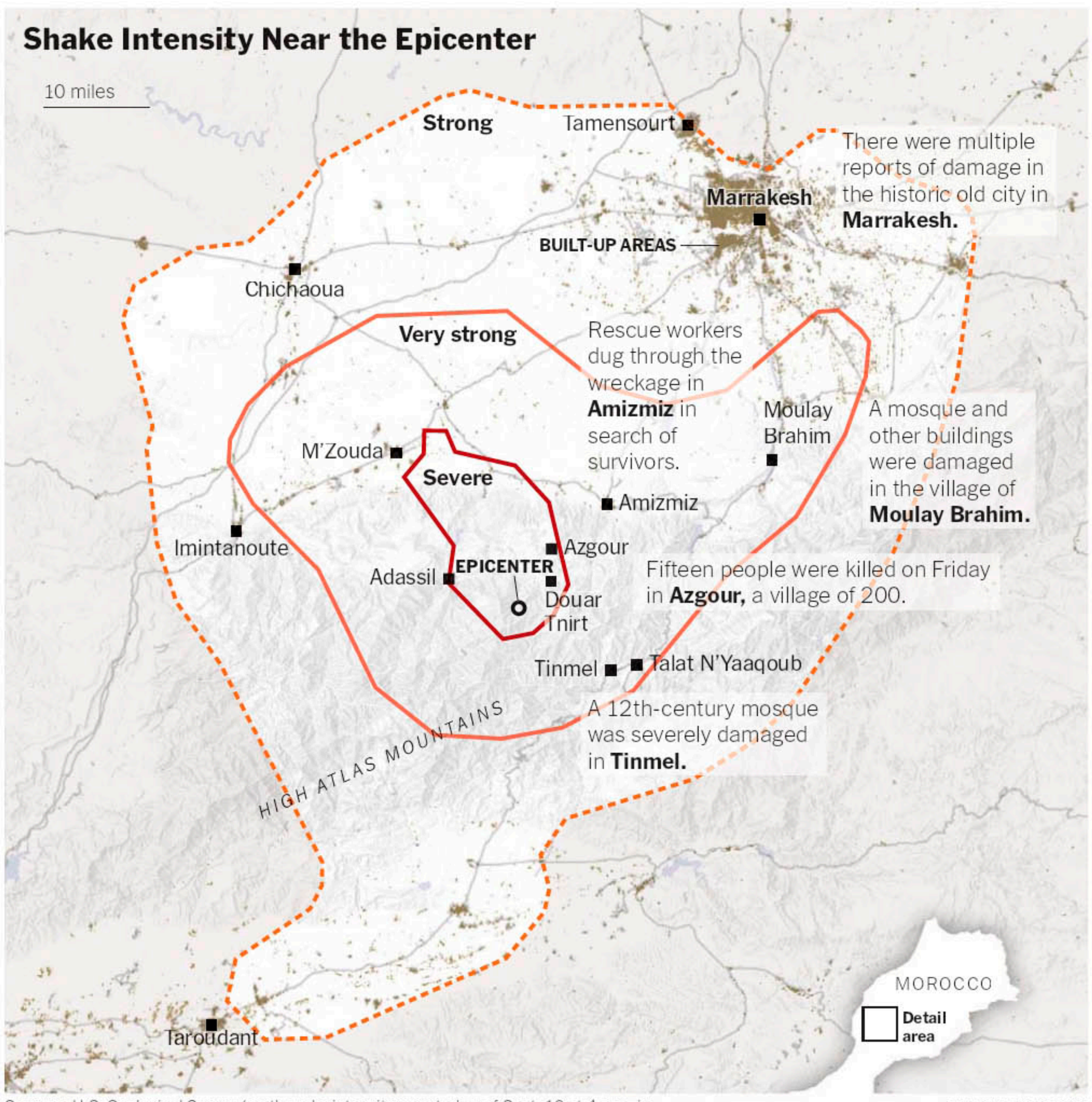
Up on top of the rubble, only a half-dozen villagers remained. They had gotten perhaps two hours of help. Then they went back to work, slamming their tools into the stones.

"God is great," one of them shouted, raising his shovel, and the rest kept digging.

JALAL MORCHIDI/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Handing out aid in Marrakesh. The government has accepted help from Britain, Spain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

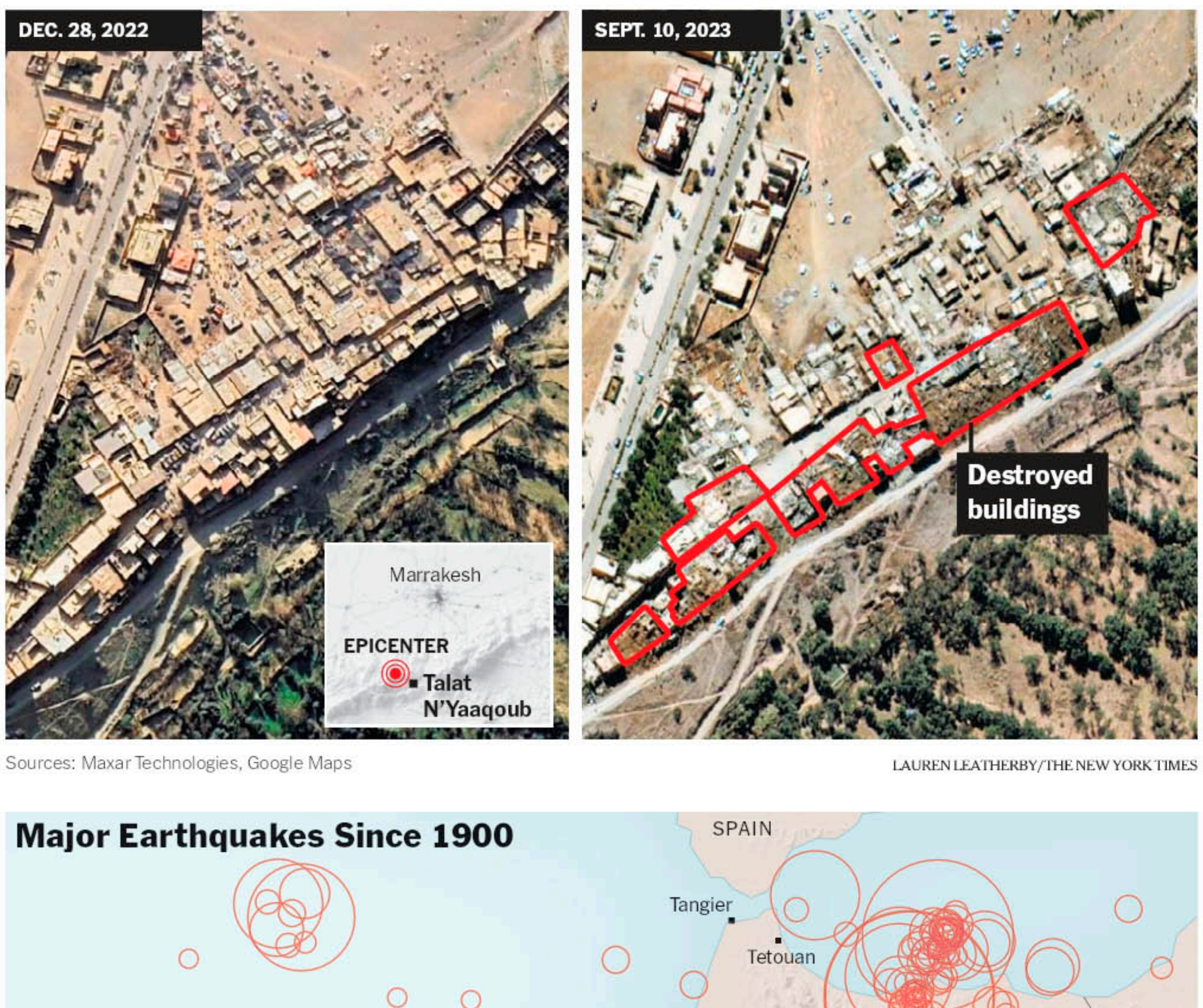
Shake Intensity Near the Epicenter



Sources: U.S. Geological Survey (earthquake intensity reported as of Sept. 10 at 4 p.m. in Morocco); GHSL - Global Human Settlement Layer, European Space Agency

THE NEW YORK TIMES

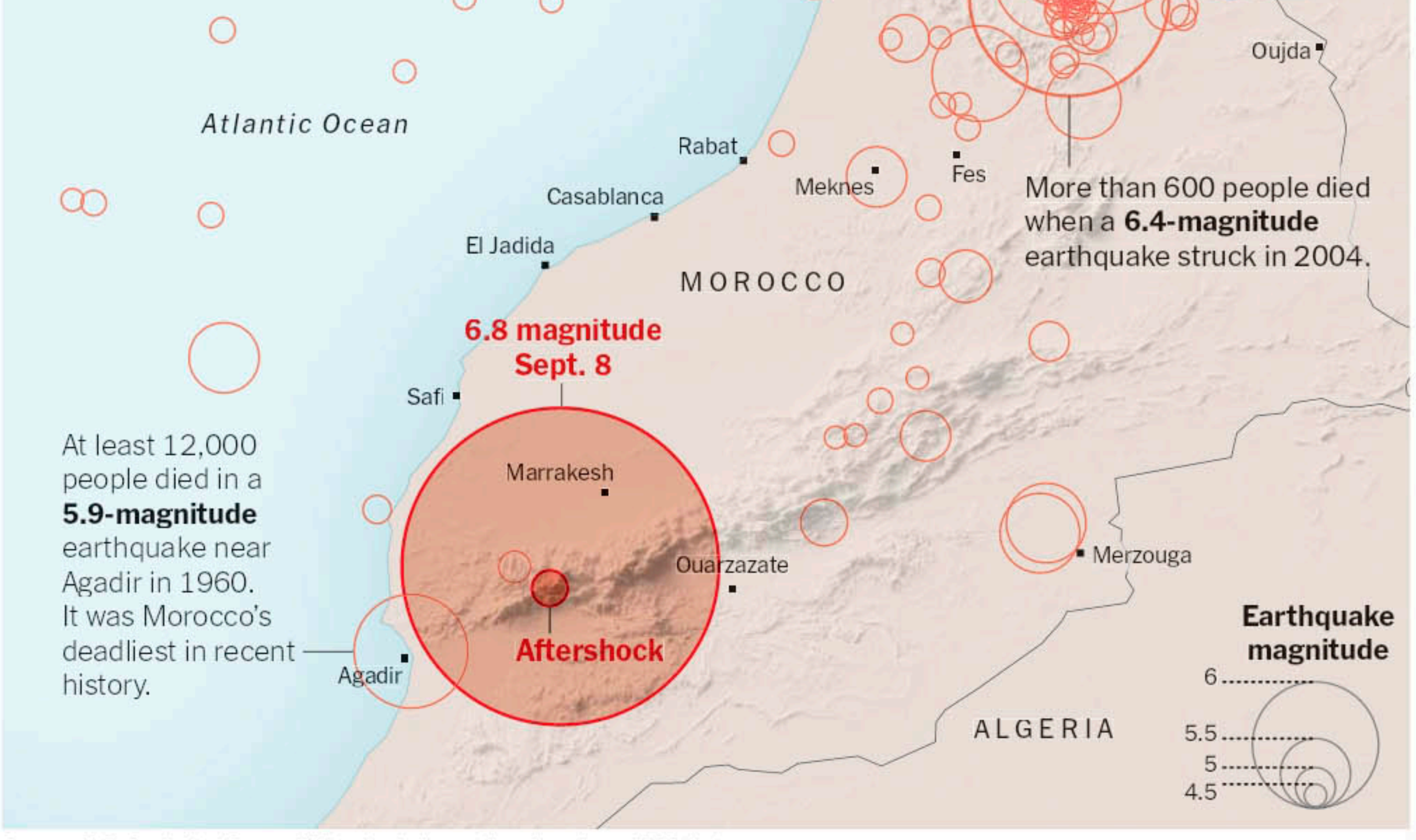
Destruction in Talat N'Yaaqoub, Morocco



Sources: Maxar Technologies, Google Maps

LAUREN LEATHERBY/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Major Earthquakes Since 1900



Source: U.S. Geological Survey | Note: Includes earthquakes since 1900 that had a magnitude of at least 4.5 according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

LAUREN LEATHERBY/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Death Toll Has Risen Past 2,800

By VIVIAN YEE and AIDA ALAMI

Rescuers have begun to reach some remote mountain villages in Morocco that were hardest hit by the strongest earthquake in the area in more than a century, but on Monday, three days after the disaster, many more settlements were still waiting for assistance.

Some roads in the Atlas Mountains near the ancient city of Marrakesh remained blocked by landslides after Friday's earthquake, which had a magnitude of at least 6.8.

In the first remarks to come directly from a senior official, government spokesman Mustapha Baitas pushed back on criticism that the response had been slow and uncoordinated, with many survivors left to fend for themselves.

In a video published on social media channels late Sunday, Mr. Baitas said that the Moroccan authorities had mounted "swift and effective" search, rescue and recovery operations.

Aid appeared to be flowing into some remote areas on Monday.

In the town of Amizmiz at the foot of the High Atlas Mountains in the province of Al Haouz, more ambulances and uniformed emergency personnel were on the streets than on Sunday, and more survivors appeared to be sheltering in disaster relief tents rather than in makeshift structures.

The death toll from the earthquake rose to 2,862, according to new figures from the Interior Ministry released on Monday. Most of those killed were in the province of Al Haouz, the ministry said. More than 2,500 others were injured, the Interior Ministry said.

Many survivors were still without power and phone service, fueling criticism on social media about the government's response. In some villages, where homes are made of mud bricks, as many as half of the houses were flattened. Many Moroccans had stepped in to fill in the gaps because aid was slow to arrive.

International rescue teams from Britain and Spain have arrived in Morocco, and more are on their way. Though dozens of countries, including the United States, have offered assistance, the Moroccan government had officially accepted aid only from Britain, Spain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

The British ambassador to Morocco, Simon Martin, said Monday in a post on social media that a team of 60 experts with equipment and four rescue dogs had flown into the city of Marrakesh overnight. Spain's Defense Ministry said a military aid team had deployed to Morocco to assist with search-and-rescue operations and to help coordinate other international teams in the emergency zone, according to a statement.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Biden with Nguyen Phu Trong, the general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, who praised Mr. Biden's vitality.

Whirlwind Trip for 80-Year-Old President

In Asia, Biden Makes Point of Being Up to Rigors of Globe-Trotting Statesmanship

By KATIE ROGERS

On the 13th hour of the third day of a two-country trip, President Biden stepped onstage at a news conference in Vietnam and bid reporters there a good evening.

At least, he thought so.

“It is evening, isn't it?” the president said, drawing laughs from the jet-lagged masses. “This around-the-world-in-five-days is interesting, isn't it?”

He was joking, but only sort of.

The trip, which began in New Delhi with the Group of 20 summit, was a whirlwind for Mr. Biden. He went abroad with a list of diplomatic to-dos, most of which were aimed at signaling to China that the United States was working to line up allies who are fed up with Beijing's aggression in the region. In Hanoi, he celebrated the elevation of the U.S.-Vietnamese partnership to the highest level in Vietnam's diplomatic hierarchy, and said it was part of his administration's strategy to bolster the American presence in the Indo-Pacific.

But Mr. Biden took another objective overseas, too, as he enters an election season facing questions about his age and stamina: showing that he is still up to the challenges of globe-trotting statesmanship.

His aides described a president in near constant motion. Before traveling to Hanoi, advisers said that Mr. Biden had met with more than 30 world leaders, mostly in informal meet-and-greets, at the G20 summit in India. The interactions, they said, were designed to be more ad hoc than the traditional bilateral meetings that accompany international summits.

Before Saturday's diplomacy, a priest went to Mr. Biden's hotel for Mass, an arrangement the president maintains anytime one of his foreign trips happens over a weekend, according to aides who asked not to be named because they were not authorized to publicly discuss behind-the-scenes movements.

The president also told aides that he wanted to reach out to the tennis player Coco Gauff, who had just won the U.S. Open, so they worked to find time for a call. (Aides said he'd been following the tournament.)

With all the running around, it seemed like little coincidence when, in Hanoi, Mr. Biden, 80, repeated himself: “These five-day trips around the world are no problem,” he told a BBC reporter who confirmed the time of day.

Mr. Biden's trip may ultimately do little to alter his political fortunes back home, where his polling numbers are low and he seems headed toward a tight race against his predecessor, Donald J. Trump. House Republicans are itching to push ahead on a long-shot impeachment inquiry, and his son, Hunter, is facing federal indictment on a gun possession charge.

The president is also facing persistent questions about his age and effectiveness as a messenger for his own agenda — part of a broader conversation in Washington about leaders, some with health problems, who remain in office well into their 80s or 90s.

As aging politicians of both parties, including Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Senator Dianne Feinstein of California, experience health complications in the public eye, some are beginning to call for more transparency into the medical history of elected leaders.

Mr. Biden in Hanoi, Vietnam, at a memorial dedicated to the military service of John McCain, who was a P.O.W. for five years.

“I think if you want to be the president of the United States, or a senator or House member, then there is a responsibility over and above that of just offering yourself,” Bill Cassidy, a Republican senator from Louisiana and a physician, said in an interview on “Meet the Press.” “It has to be that you can show that you have clarity.”

Back home and abroad, White House officials have publicly expressed irritation over news reports that describe the president as keeping the same languid campaign schedule as Mr. Trump, who is spending most of his time filming videos railing against his indictments and collecting endorsements from other Republicans. Several pointed to Mr. Biden's Asia trip as evidence that he was busy with governing.

Meeting a grueling schedule with a few hiccups along the way.

In the past, aides have adjusted schedules to accommodate the daily rhythms of the oldest president in American history, including last year, when initial plans for a 10-day trip to the Middle East and Europe were split into separate journeys. On more recent trips abroad, Mr. Biden had skipped evening dinners, absences that aides attributed to the president's desire to prepare for the next day or check in on things back home.

This time, in India, Mr. Biden made the dinner. And on Monday in Hanoi, he was up early for a day of activities that included a visit to a memorial dedicated to the military service of John McCain and to attend a luncheon — where officials toasted to his health — before traveling back to the United States. On the 30-hour leg home, Mr. Biden was scheduled to address troops in Alaska to commemorate the anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Ben LaBolt, the White House communications director, who was on the trip with the president, said that the schedule was not intended to make a point. “President Biden's focus on strengthening alliances and building relationships with world leaders is a longtime hallmark of his career.” (The president was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for part of his 36 years in the chamber.)

Even if Mr. Biden's age wasn't a topic of conversation among his aides, it was apparently on the mind of at least one other leader. Nguyen Phu Trong, the 79-year-old general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, made a point of publicly commenting about Mr. Biden's vitality.

“You have nary aged a day and I would say you look even better than before,” said Mr. Trong, who saw Mr. Biden on a trip to Washington in 2015. “Every feature of you, Mr. President, is very much complimentary of your image.”

The president laughed appreciatively.

At the news conference in Hanoi, Mr. Biden grabbed a microphone and walked around the stage answering questions about China, Russia and Ukraine. Not all of his responses were direct, however. At one point, he invoked John Wayne in a long soliloquy about the evolving global view on climate change.

“And there's a — my — my brother loves havin' — there's famous lines from movies that he always quotes. You know, it — and — one of the — is — the — there's a movie about John Wayne,” the president began, continuing in stops and starts until he finally made his point about global warming.

Later, he seemed unsure of which reporter to call on from a preselected list furnished by aides — “No, I ain't calling on you,” he told reporters who raised their hands, hoping to fill the void.

Near the end of his 25-minute appearance, Mr. Biden told reporters he was ready to go to bed.

But then he continued taking questions, including one from a reporter who asked him if he'd met with the Chinese premier, Li Qiang, who attended the G20 summit after China's top leader, Xi Jinping, decided to skip it.

“We talked about what we talked about at the conference overall. We talked about stability,” Mr. Biden said. “It wasn't confrontational at all.”

A reporter then asked if he was putting the United States' strategic interests over human rights issues in Vietnam. As Mr. Biden answered — “I've raised it with every person I met with,” he said — the voice of his press secretary came over the loudspeaker, the public-relations equivalent of a shepherd's hook, telling the world the event was over.

Music began playing, and the president left the stage.

It was not yet bedtime.

Aides said that Mr. Biden finished the day by posing for photographs with U.S. Embassy staff members and military officials before receiving a briefing from Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken on the deadly earthquake in Morocco.

Mr. Biden with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and other leaders at the G20 in New Delhi.

For Biden, Part of Neither A War Nor Its Protests, A Visit Offers Opportunity

By PETER BAKER

HANOI, Vietnam — As he wrapped up a two-day trip to Hanoi, his first visit to Vietnam, President Biden on Monday made a point of stopping by a memorial to his old friend, Senator John McCain, the famed prisoner of war who was later instrumental in forging reconciliation with a one-time enemy.

Mr. Biden brought John Kerry, another combat veteran turned senator who ultimately joined Mr. McCain to normalize relations between Washington and Hanoi in 1995. For Mr. McCain and Mr. Kerry, the bloody battles of Vietnam changed their lives, leaving scar tissue so indelible that it shaped their thinking and careers for decades.

Mr. Biden's relationship to Vietnam and the war, however, was drastically different. While a contemporary of his two veteran friends, Mr. Biden never served in uniform, yet neither did he protest the war along with others of his age. He was too busy, he has said, getting an education, starting a family and entering politics. While he opposed the war, it did not define him, and he brought little baggage when he landed in Hanoi on a diplomatic mission this week.

For Mr. Biden, then, agreeing to a new strategic relationship with Vietnam during his trip was more about countering China than about exorcising ghosts of the past. It was a pragmatic geopolitical calculation: Vietnam wants more distance from Beijing, and the United States wants more friends in the region.

The fact that a large bust of Ho Chi Minh looked on as he sealed the deal with Vietnam's Communist leader, Nguyen Phu Trong, went unremarked on. So did the many tons of American bombs that once fell on this colonial city. For that matter, the repression of the current government barely rated a couple of boilerplate sentences from the president.

But Mr. Biden paused for a moment of reflection during a meeting with corporate executives on Monday. “I looked out the window of my hotel today and I thought to myself, you know, I was a young man in college and all of my friends and I were assuming we were coming to Vietnam — not to visit,” he said. “Look what's changed.”

The two sides highlighted that change with an exchange of items symbolizing how they have moved on. Two American veterans returned a diary recovered on the battlefield in 1967 to the Vietnamese soldier who wrote it. Vietnamese officials presented Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken with identification cards of U.S. troops still missing in action.

To the extent that the Vietnam War influences Mr. Biden today, it is a cautionary tale of misguided use of force overseas — one that most recently informed his decision to pull American forces out of Afghanistan after 20 years. As it happened, the chaotic withdrawal from Kabul in 2021 reminded many of the searing image of an American helicopter taking off from the roof of a Saigon building in 1975, the symbol of an ignominious ending to a disastrous war.

“I think he learned to dig in hard to find out what's really going on and what the facts are and don't necessarily take conventional wisdom, but be suspicious,” Mr. Kerry, a Democrat who represented Massachusetts and now serves as Mr. Biden's climate envoy, said in an interview. “He's made comments to me about feeling the responsibility to make sure that as president you don't get yourself into an unwanted war.”

Former Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican from Nebraska and another Vietnam veteran who served with Mr. Biden in Congress, said in a separate interview from the United States that the future president often contemplated the enduring meaning of that war.

“Biden and I spoke often about Vietnam and its consequences,” said Mr. Hagel, who also served with Mr. Biden in President Barack Obama's administration as defense secretary. “How we disastrously drifted into a needless war that cost America over 58,000 lives and caused political chaos in the U.S.”

“Lessons learned,” he added. “I think those lessons have very much underpinned Biden's foreign policy thinking and philosophy: Caution. Careful analysis.”

Mr. Biden is the fourth member of the Vietnam generation to be president and the fourth who did not serve in the war, but the first for whom it has not been much of a political headache. Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Donald J. Trump were all attacked for the ways they avoided Vietnam.

Mr. Biden, four years older than each of those men, received five student deferments while at the University of Delaware and Syracuse University College of Law. As he was about to graduate in 1968, he was classified 1-Y after a medical exam, a designation meaning he was not fit for service except in a national emergency. A spokesman in 2008 attributed that classification to asthma.

In that sense, Mr. Biden's record was not that different from that of Mr. Trump, who received four student deferments and then was also classified 1-Y in 1968 because of what he said were bone spurs in his foot. But Mr. Trump's diagnosis came as a favor from a foot doctor in Queens who rented an office from Mr. Trump's father, two of the doctor's daughters told The New York Times. Mr. Trump once said that “my personal Vietnam” was avoiding sexually transmitted diseases while dating.

Mr. Biden received little criticism for his medical classification even though he played college football despite any asthma. That may reflect the evolution of the politics of Vietnam: Today's electorate is far less dominated by voters with personal memories of that era who are attentive to whether candidates served or not.

While Mr. Biden never put on a uniform, he likewise did not pick up a protest sign. In the past, he has talked disdainfully of student protesters who took over a university office at Syracuse. “We looked up and said, ‘Look at these assholes,’” he recalled in “Promises to Keep,” his 2007 memoir. “That's how far apart from the antiwar movement I was.”

He did not see the war as a question of principle. “I didn't argue that the war in Vietnam was immoral,” he wrote. “It was merely stupid and a horrendous waste of time, money and lives based on a flawed premise.”

In 1987, when Mr. Biden was taking his first shot at the White House, he distanced himself from both sides of the war debate. “I'm not big on flak jackets and tie-dye shirts,” he told reporters. “Other people marched. I ran for office.”

A mission focused more on China than on exorcising ghosts.

On the campaign trail and in office, though, he was a voice against the war. He railed against it during a speech at the Delaware Democratic Convention in 1972 in his first race for the Senate when he was 29. “The soul of America rises in torment, and a generation of Americans believe that ‘foreign policy’ means only body counts and rubble in what were once peaceful hamlets,” he said, an early use of the soul-of-America phrase that is a regular staple of today's speeches in a different context.

Once in the Senate, Mr. Biden voted against aid for South Vietnam, a move criticized in later years by Republicans who viewed it as a betrayal of an ally. “That was part of the deal when we pulled out of South Vietnam, to try and help them survive,” Robert M. Gates, who served as defense secretary under Mr. Obama before Mr. Hagel, said in a 2014 interview on NPR criticizing Mr. Biden's national security judgment.

Over the years, Mr. Biden sponsored legislation to help Vietnamese refugees and supported moves led by Mr. Clinton, Mr. McCain and Mr. Kerry to establish normal relations with Vietnam.

“He always tended to defer to McCain and Kerry on Vietnam issues” possibly “because his lack of service made him politically shy to engage,” said Frank Jannuzi, a longtime Asia adviser to Mr. Biden in the Senate. “But he had pretty strong views.”

To Mr. Biden, Vietnam showed the futility of committing vast resources to a war that cannot be won. “The ‘we can't fight harder for them than they are willing to fight for themselves’ ethos was reinforced in Biden's mind,” said Mr. Jannuzi, citing a regular line used by Mr. Biden. “And I think you saw this decades later in his decision not to reverse Trump's Afghan pullout plan.”

Ron Klain, the president's first White House chief of staff, said questions of war and peace were also personal for Mr. Biden. While he did not serve in Vietnam, the president experienced the burdens of war on a family when his son Beau Biden was deployed to Iraq.

“He's always aware that others in his generation served in that war and he didn't,” Mr. Klain said. “And aware that the burden of service falls on a small percentage of families in this country — of which the Bidens became when Beau served in Iraq. It impacts his view about sending Americans into harm's way and why he insists on there being a clear and compelling rationale to do it.”

China Uses A.I. to Spread Disinformation About Maui Wildfires

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in future information operations, including the next U.S. presidential election. That is the pattern that Russia set in the year or so leading up to the 2016 election.

"This is going into a new direction, which is sort of amplifying conspiracy theories that are not directly related to some of their interests, like Taiwan," said Brian Liston, a researcher at Recorded Future, a cybersecurity company based in Massachusetts.

If China does engage in influence operations for the election next year, U.S. intelligence officials have assessed in recent months, it is likely to try to diminish President Biden and raise the profile of former President Donald J. Trump. While that may seem counterintuitive to Americans who remember Mr. Trump's effort to blame Beijing for what he called the "China virus," the intelligence officials have concluded that Chinese leaders prefer Mr. Trump. He has called for pulling Americans out of Japan, South Korea and other parts of Asia, while Mr. Biden has cut off China's access to the most advanced chips and the equipment made to produce them.

China's promotion of a conspiracy theory about the fires comes after Mr. Biden vented in Bali last fall to Xi Jinping, China's president, about Beijing's role in the spread of such disinformation. According to administration officials, Mr. Biden angrily criticized Mr. Xi for the spread of false accusations that the United States operated biological weapons laboratories in Ukraine.

Facing a new phase of propaganda wars as an election nears.

GO NAKAMURA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Lahaina, on Maui's western coast, was devastated by wind-fueled wildfires in mid-August. The natural disaster spawned conspiracy theories almost from the start.

There is no indication that Russia and China are working together on information operations, according to the researchers and administration officials, but they often echo each other's messages, particularly when it comes to criticizing U.S. policies. Their combined efforts suggest a new phase of the disinformation wars is about to begin, one bolstered by the use of A.I. tools.

"We don't have direct evidence of coordination between China and Russia in these campaigns, but we're certainly finding alignment and a sort of synchronization," said William Marcellino, a researcher at RAND and an author of a new report warning that artificial intelligence will enable a "critical jump forward" in global influence operations.

The wildfires in Hawaii — like many natural disasters these days — spawned numerous rumors, false reports and conspiracy theories almost from the start.

Caroline Amy Orr Bueno, a researcher at the University of Maryland's Applied Research Lab for Intelligence and Security, reported that a coordinated Russian campaign began on Twitter, the social media platform now known as X, on Aug. 9, a day after the fires started.

It spread the phrase "Hawaii, not Ukraine," from one obscure account with few followers through a series of conservative or right-wing accounts like Breitbart and ultimately the Russian state news media, reaching thousands of users with a message intended to undercut U.S. military assistance to Ukraine.

FLORENCE LO/REUTERS

The Biden administration is struggling with how to push back on China and Xi Jinping, its leader.

China's state media apparatus often echoes Russian themes, especially animosity toward the United States. But in this case, it also pursued a distinct disinformation campaign.

Recorded Future first reported that the Chinese government mounted a covert campaign to blame a "weather weapon" for the fires, identifying numerous posts in mid-August falsely claiming that MI6, the British foreign intelligence service, had revealed "the amazing truth behind the wildfire." Posts with the exact language appeared on social media sites across the internet, including Pinterest, Tumblr, Medium and Pixiv, a Japanese site used by artists.

Other inauthentic accounts spread similar content, often accompanied with mislabeled videos, including one from a popular TikTok account, The Paranormal Chic, that showed a transformer explosion in Chile. According to Recorded Future, the Chinese content often echoed — and amplified — posts by conspiracy theorists and extremists in the United States, including white supremacists.

The Chinese campaign operated across many of the major social media platforms — and in many languages, suggesting it was aimed at reaching a global audience. Microsoft's Threat Analysis Center identified inauthentic posts in 31 languages, including French, German and Italian, but also in less prominent ones like Igbo, Odia and Guarani.

The artificially generated images of the Hawaii wildfires identified by Microsoft's researchers appeared on multiple platforms, including a Reddit post in Dutch. "These specific A.I.-generated images appear to be exclusively used" by Chinese accounts used in this campaign, Microsoft said in a report. "They do not appear to be present elsewhere online."

Clint Watts, the general manager of Microsoft's Threat Analysis Center, said that China appeared to have adopted Russia's playbook for influence operations, laying the groundwork to influence politics in the United States and other countries.

"This would be Russia in 2015," he said, referring to the bots and inauthentic accounts Russia created before its extensive online influence operation during the 2016 election. "If we look at how other actors have done this, they are building capacity. Now they're building accounts that are covert."

Natural disasters have often been the focus of disinformation campaigns, allowing bad actors to exploit emotions to accuse governments of shortcomings, either in preparation or in response. The goal can be to undermine trust in specific policies, like U.S. support for Ukraine, or more generally to sow internal discord. By suggesting the United States was testing or using secret weapons against its own citizens, China's effort also seemed intended to depict the country as a reckless, militaristic power.

"We've always been able to come together in the wake of humanitarian disasters and provide relief in the wake of earthquakes or hurricanes or fires," said Mr. Smith, who is presenting some of Microsoft's findings to Congress on Tuesday. "And to see this kind of pursuit instead is both, I think, deeply disturbing and something that the global community should draw a red line around and put off limits."

An Arrest Fuels Calls to Toughen Britain's Stance on China

By MARK LANDLER

LONDON — Even by the prolific standards of China's foreign influence operations, it would represent a sensational case of infiltration.

A 28-year-old British man who worked as a researcher deep inside Britain's Parliament was arrested in March on suspicion of working for the Chinese government. The man, who denies being a spy, worked with prominent lawmakers on China policy, raising fears of possible security breaches and widening a rift within the governing Conservative Party over how London should engage with an increasingly assertive Beijing.

"The Chinese are infiltrating across the board; they go for anything and everything," said Steve Tsang, director of the SOAS China Institute in London. "What is new is how effective they are, and how far they have managed to go."

The Metropolitan Police said two men were arrested under the Official Secrets Act and were released on bail until October. The men, whose identities were not released by the police, have yet to be charged, and lawmakers were asked not to prejudice the investigation by naming them. (News organizations have also not done so, aside from The Sunday Times, which first reported the news of the researcher's arrest on Saturday and has since named him.) Little has been disclosed about the second man, except that he is reported to be in his 30s.

In a statement through a law firm on Monday, the researcher said that he was "completely innocent" and had spent his career "trying to educate others about the challenge and threats presented by the Chinese Communist Party."

If the man is found to have worked for China, the security breach will raise serious questions over how he passed the vetting process to get a job at the heart of one of the most sensitive policy debates in Britain. The man had earlier lived and worked in China, according to The Sunday Times.

A researcher for Parliament is accused of spying for Beijing.

The paper said the man may have been recruited there by Chinese agents to return to London with a goal of disrupting the work of the Parliament's China Research Group, a circle of lawmakers who have long warned about China's efforts to influence British universities, think tanks, and government ministries — and have urged successive British leaders to take a harder line against Beijing.

One of the lawmakers with whom the man had limited contact with is Tom Tugendhat, the founder and co-chairman of the China Research Group who now serves as security minister in the government of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. Mr. Tugendhat is pressing internally to declare China a threat to Britain's safety and interests — a cry that has been taken up by China hard-liners outside the government.

"China sees us now as the soft underbelly of the NATO alliance," Iain Duncan Smith, who once served as leader of the Conservative Party, wrote in The Daily Express, a tabloid. "Our policy seems to entail not upsetting China." He called the arrest "a slap in the face of the U.K.'s weak policy on China."

In 2021, China put Mr. Duncan Smith, Mr. Tugendhat and several other individuals and organizations on a blacklist, claiming, among other things, that they had spread lies about human rights abuses in the Xinjiang region.

Yet for all the hand-wringing and demands for a harder line, analysts said the British government was unlikely to deviate from its current approach, which delicately balances an acknowledgment of China as an "epoch-defining challenge" with a cold-eyed pragmatism about the need to preserve commercial ties.

"U.K. diplomacy toward China has never been particularly ideological, one way or the other," Professor Tsang said. "You've occasional periods of misguided opportunism or reckless rhetoric. But in general, the British are pragmatic."

"China is a reality," he added. "We have to deal with them."

Britain's foreign secretary, James Cleverly, recently visited Beijing, after visits by senior American officials, including Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. British officials are eager for China to send a high-level delegation to a summit meeting later this fall on how to regulate artificial intelligence technology, which is a signature initiative of Mr. Sunak's.

There were signs that other British cabinet ministers were resisting efforts to suspend their diplomatic and commercial outreach.

"China is a country that we do a lot of business with," the business secretary, Kemi Badenoch, said on Sky News on Monday. "China is a country that is significant in terms of world economics. It sits on the U.N. Security Council. We certainly should not be describing China as a foe, but we can describe it as a challenge."

Still, for Mr. Sunak, the revelations are an acute headache. On Sunday, he raised the spying case with China's prime minister, Li Qiang, at the gathering of Group of 20 leaders in New Delhi. Mr. Sunak said he told Mr. Li that he had "very strong concerns about any interference in our parliamentary democracy."

The Chinese government quickly denied the report, calling it "completely fabricated and nothing but malicious slander." A spokeswoman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mao Ning, said her country conducted no espionage inside Britain.

The back-and-forth is unlikely to quell the torrent of questions that followed The Sunday Times's report. And some say the researcher's efforts had tilted the debate over how to deal with China in Britain.

PETER NICHOLLS/REUTERS

Tom Tugendhat, a hard-liner on China who is now Britain's security minister, had contact with the spying suspect.

Luke de Pulford, a human rights campaigner and the executive director of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, said the man had successfully discredited people who were critical of the Chinese government with some journalists.

"Privately, he was vicious — telling journalists that I was 'dangerous' and 'not to be trusted on China,'" Mr. de Pulford said in posts on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter. "He was an authoritative and knowledgeable voice — some people listened. Publicly, he was incredibly clever. He hid behind a visage of 'reasoned hawkishness.'"

Britain has struggled to chart a consistent China policy since the Conservative-led government of David Cameron, whose chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, spoke of a "golden decade" of ties between the two countries.

As relations between China and the United States soured, Britain came under pressure from the administration of President Donald J. Trump to take a harder line. Prime Minister Boris Johnson agreed to sharply limit the role of the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei in building the country's 5G network.

In 2020, with Beijing threatening to impose a draconian national security law on Hong Kong, Mr. Johnson pledged to allow nearly three million people from the former British colony to live and work in Britain.

Mr. Johnson's successor, Liz Truss, vowed to take an even tougher approach. Now out of office, Ms. Truss recently visited Taiwan, where she called for the creation of an "economic NATO" to counter China's influence. Mr. Sunak, whose instincts tend to be more pragmatic, has largely avoided the language of Ms. Truss.

But he will face continuing pressure from cases like that of the suspected spy in Parliament. Last July, Parliament's intelligence and security committee issued a report that declared, "Chinese intelligence services target the U.K. and its overseas interests prolifically and aggressively."

The government's "lack of action to protect our assets from a known threat," the report concluded, "was a serious failure, and one from which the U.K. may feel the consequences for years to come."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE PRESS OFFICE OF THE LIBYAN PRIME MINISTER, VIA AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

A collapsed road in the city of Derna, about 180 miles east of Benghazi, Libya. "Entire neighborhoods" vanished, an official said.

Hundreds Are Feared Dead in Libya Flooding

By MOHAMMED ABDUSAMEE and ISABELLA KWAI

Tripoli, Libya — Deadly floods swept through northeastern Libya over the weekend, with the top official in the region warning that the toll could exceed 2,000 dead as rescue teams searched for survivors.

The Libyan Red Crescent, a nonprofit aid group whose volunteers had helped evacuate residents, said late on Monday that more than 300 people had died in the floods in the port city of Derna in eastern Libya. And more than 5,000 to 6,000 were missing because of floods in the city, apparently caused by the collapse of dams above Derna, a spokesman for the Libyan National Army that controls eastern Libya said, according to The Associated Press.

Exact figures on the scale of fatalities were difficult because of ongoing search efforts, a spokesman for the authorities in that region said on Monday evening.

Libya has been divided between an internationally recognized government based in Tripoli and a separately administered region in the east.

It was not immediately clear what the head of the divided country's eastern region, Osama Hamad, or the military spokesman, Ahmed Mismari, were basing their numbers on. But the flooding was centered in the region under Mr. Hamad's administration, with parts of it declared a disaster zone in the aftermath and rescuers struggling to gain access to the area to provide help.

The internationally recognized authority in western Libya, in Tripoli, did not put out fatality figures, but its leaders held an emergency meeting on Monday on the crisis and said they had sent ambulances, rescue convoys and doctors to the area. They declared three days of mourning for the victims of the flooding.

For years, Libya has been fractured between the two rival governments and prime ministers — and the militias they control.

A storm that battered the region destroyed vehicles and damaged buildings in Derna, where residents reported being trapped.

Aid workers are struggling to reach the worst-hit region.

Heavy rainfall over the weekend in the country's northeast swelled waters past riverbanks and officials said the force of the floodwaters swept away hundreds of homes and washed away roads. Stranded residents posted accounts of being trapped inside homes and cars, according to footage on social media.

"Entire neighborhoods have been swept away by the sea, and entire neighborhoods have disappeared with their inhabitants," Mr. Hamad said in a phone interview with the Libyan television channel al-Masar on Monday from Derna.

The flooding also ravaged other areas, including the cities of Al-Bayda and Shahhat, where the rising waters forced more evacuations. One medical center in Al-Bayda said it had been forced to move patients, and it shared footage of workers desperately trying to sweep floodwaters outside submerged hallways.

Derna appeared to have suffered the worst. Local officials there have declared the area a disaster zone, with large parts of the city submerged in water. Roads into the city have been cut off, the City Council confirmed on Monday on its Facebook page. It called for the opening of a maritime passageway to the coastal city and for urgent international intervention.

"The situation is catastrophic," the Council said. "The city of Derna is pleading for help."

Residents of the area described chaotic scenes.

"What has happened is a tragedy and a humanitarian catastrophe for us," said Mohammed Jadallah, a Derna resident who woke up his three children and fled the city on Sunday night after water began seeping into his home from the intensifying rain. Since then, with communications down, he has been unable to reach his siblings and has been unable to return to Derna because of the collapsed roads.

"We don't know where our families are, we don't have homes, and we've heard that there are a significant number of casualties," he said, adding that he had already seen photos of his home, which had been washed away. "We have become displaced."

Many of the victims' bodies in Derna had been scattered through the city by the flooding, said Mohammed Abulammousha, a spokesman for the Hamad administration's interior ministry. In a phone interview on Monday evening, he said he had witnessed "horrifying scenes."

He cited a shortage of rescue capabilities and difficulties getting to some of the affected areas. But he added that the authorities were trying to rescue survivors, provide them with food and evacuate them from the city's devastated areas.

"We call on international organizations and countries to assist us in the catastrophe that has befallen the city," he said.

Some foreign governments and aid groups offered to help. The U.S. embassy in Libya said on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that they were in close contact with the United Nations and Libyan authorities to quickly bring assistance. An emergency team was being prepared to support local authorities and parties, said Georgette Gagnon, the U.N's humanitarian coordinator.

The United Arab Emirates also said it would send urgent relief and rescue teams to Libya, according to the Emirati state news agency.

The drenching rains were part of a weather front that had unleashed major flooding in Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria last week, sweeping away buildings and killing more than a dozen people before moving toward Libya.

At Oceans Court Tribunal, Island Nations Speak Up About Climate Change Toll

By MARLISE SIMONS

A group of small island nations threatened by frequent storms and rising seas is for the first time appearing before an international court to seek its help, hoping for a decision that excessive greenhouse gases are pollutants that violate international law.

If the group's request is successful, the court's opinion could lead to wide-ranging claims for damages.

Hearings in the case opened on Monday at the request of nine Pacific and Caribbean island nations that have joined. The sessions at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in Hamburg, Germany, are expected to last for two weeks and have drawn wide attention.

Representatives of more than 50 countries, including large emitters of greenhouse gases including China, India and European Union members, have asked to participate via oral or written interventions.

Arguments will revolve around the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the legal framework that covers uses of the oceans and their resources, including the obligation to protect the marine environment. The convention has been ratified by 168 nations, though not by the United States.

But the convention, negotiated in the 1970s, does not mention emissions of greenhouse gases and their effects on the warming and acidification of the oceans, and on sea-level rise.

For the tribunal, this will be a test case: The Oceans Court, as it is also called, has ruled on issues like fisheries, rights of passage, and seabed mining and pollution, but it has never heard a case on greenhouse gases and their impact on climate change and the oceans.

Addressing the tribunal on Monday, Gaston Alfonso Browne, the prime minister of Antigua and Barbuda, noted that "in the past weeks we have witnessed the highest ocean temperatures on record."

He asked for the judges to clarify existing laws and obligations to help stem further disaster, warning that "the world is teetering dangerously on the precipice of a climate catastrophe."

Leaders of the island nations argue that they did not create the problems and account for only 1 percent of carbon emissions but bear catastrophic effects from climate change. Some atolls have disappeared underwater, coasts are eroding, and land has become uninhabitable as fresh water for drinking and planting crops has turned saline. They believe broader disaster looms.

Kausea Natano, the prime minister of Tuvalu, said the island nations had been issuing warnings and pleading for attention since 1990 but had not seen the necessary action.

Tuvalu, which is made up of nine islands in the Pacific, "will become mostly uninhabitable, if not inundated, in the next few decades," he said. "More than 10,000 people will be forced to leave."

Naima Te Maile Fifita, a lawyer from Tuvalu, said she spoke as a mother and on behalf of island youth as she asked the judges for a "robust response."

She said that young islanders, including law students and activists, had been pushing their elders to turn to the courts. "It is fitting that young people have been at the forefront," she said. "It is we who will inherit the decisions made before us."

The island nations are not suing for damages but are seeking a so-called advisory opinion on what legal obligations countries have to prevent damaging the oceans. The key question is whether the judges, as they interpret the law on protection, will take into account the scientific consensus on the impact of greenhouse gases on the climate and the marine environment.

Experts say the answer could affect claims for damages in international and national courts.

If the judges conclude that the causes of ocean warming can be defined as marine pollution, it "would open the way to bringing successful proceedings for claims here or in other international courts," Alan Boyle, an emeritus professor of international law at the University of Edinburgh, has said.

Experts say the tribunal's opinion could also affect national jurisdictions, where activists are increasingly taking on governments and energy companies for climate damage and have achieved some successes.

The problems of the island states vary: Volcanic islands in the Caribbean have suffered infrastructure damage from a growing number of hurricanes. Low-lying atolls, mainly in the Pacific, have lost landmass from erosion and flooding, and fresh water for crops and drinking because of salinity. Some residents have had to leave.

David Freestone, a co-author of a 2021 World Bank report on the legal dimensions of sea-level rise, said the tribunal could also clarify other questions stemming from the impacts of changes in the oceans.

Countries are asking how their territorial waters are affected when land disappears. Low-lying islands may shrink or expand. And, Mr. Freestone said, they are asking about their vast exclusive economic zones and vital fishing rights. "After much debate, the jury is still out," he said. "An authoritative modern tribunal of Law of the Sea specialists could clarify such ambiguities."

The islands petitioning the Hamburg tribunal have also asked the International Court of Justice to weigh in on governments' legal obligations "in respect of climate change" and what the consequences might be if they failed to meet them.

That request was made by the United Nations General Assembly in March.

Lawyers believe that the judges in Hamburg will respond first, perhaps within a few months, and that their opinion will carry special weight because of their expertise as members of the Law of the Sea tribunal.

Women's Soccer in Spain Has Troubles, Even After National Federation Chief Quits

By RACHEL CHAUNDLER

ZARAGOZA, Spain — After three weeks of protests and calls for his resignation, Spain's soccer chief, Luis Rubiales, has quit, but the problems that surfaced in the wake of his forcible kiss of a player after the Women's World Cup remain.

The player, Jennifer Hermoso, has filed a criminal complaint of sexual assault against him. During the last week, accusations have emerged of chauvinistic treatment toward players, and Spanish league players have started a strike over pay.

While Beatriz Álvarez, the president of Spain's fledgling women's league, Liga F, welcomed Mr. Rubiales's resignation, which she said "should have come sooner," she also lamented how it "leaves us the challenge of reconstructing Spanish football after the enormous reputational damage that his behavior has caused."

It is unclear if Mr. Rubiales's resignation, which came on Sunday, will be enough to appease the national team, whose first game since their World Cup victory is less than two weeks away. The entire team and dozens of other players signed a statement last month refusing to play for their country "if the current leaders continue." They have not said if they will take the field against Sweden on Sept. 22.

Mr. Rubiales's resignation comes on the heels of the firing last week of the squad's coach, Jorge Vilda, whom Mr. Rubiales loyally supported for years despite complaints of controlling behavior. Fifteen star players walked out in protest last year.

But the troubles of Spanish women's soccer are not limited to the national squad. Bickering is also rampant in the professional clubs. A pay dispute between the players and their clubs disrupted the start of the season this weekend. Talks are taking place between the women's league, on behalf of the clubs, and the unions, but if higher wage demands are not met, matches scheduled this coming weekend could be halted.

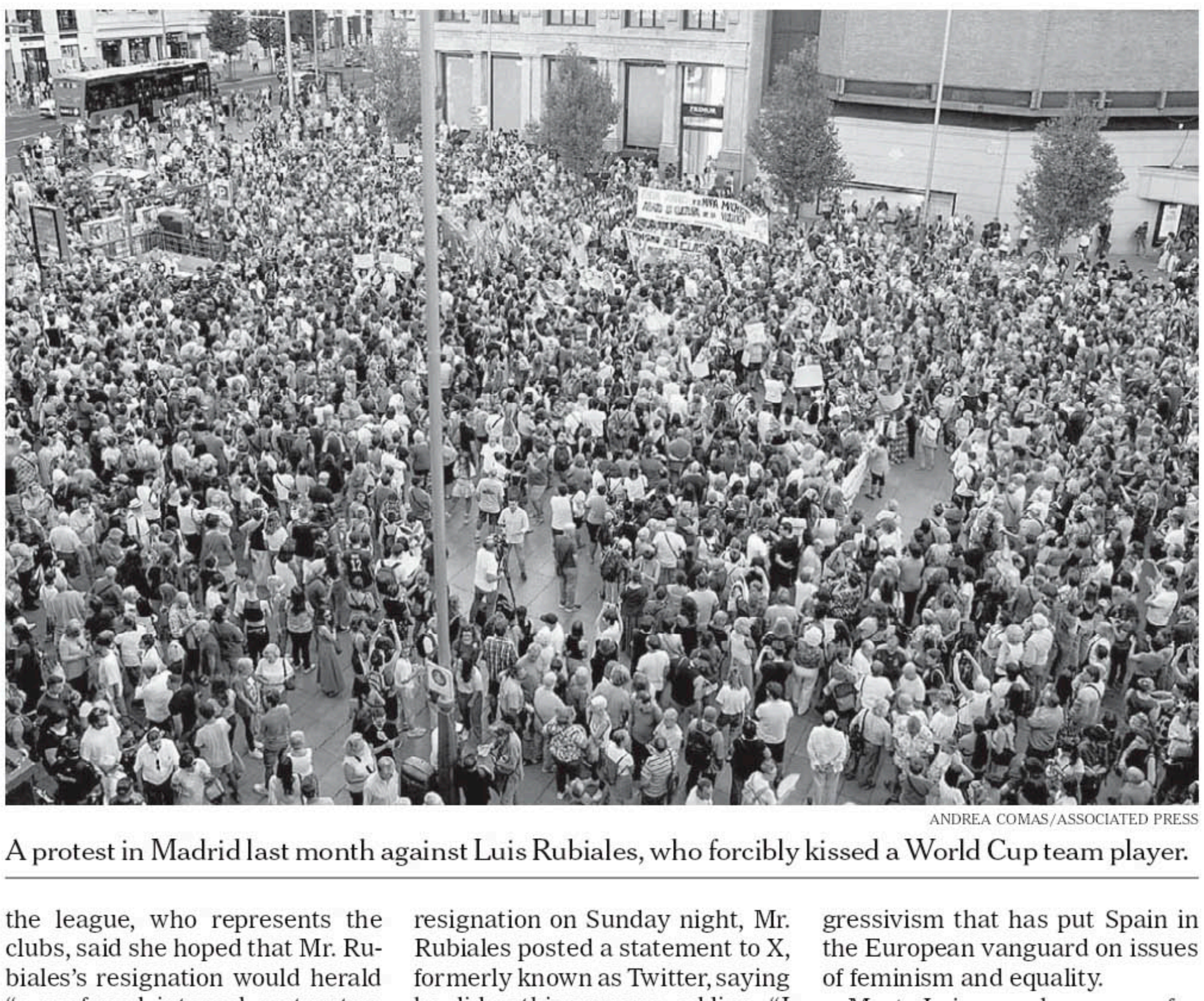
"The players are feeling pretty angry," said Amanda Gutiérrez, the head of Futpro, one of the unions. "They want to play, they don't want this war."

At the heart of the dispute, which has gone on for months, is the current minimum salary for female players, — 16,000 euros, or about $17,000 — compared with €180,000, or about $192,000, for their male counterparts, according to Spain's chief players union, A.F.E.

The players are seeking a minimum salary of €23,000 for the upcoming season, with the possibility of an increase to €25,000 if the league generates more than €8 million in sponsor income.

The women's league says it cannot afford to pay a minimum salary of more than €20,000 because of other expenses, including for licenses and referees. It is also required to give 20 percent of its sponsorship income to the national soccer federation, which uses the money to promote its nonprofessional categories and develop its soccer programs.

Ms. Álvarez, the president of the league, who represents the clubs, said she hoped that Mr. Rubiales's resignation would herald "a profound internal restructuring," and "institutional respect and collaboration" that would enable "the advancement and sustainability of women's football."



ANDREA COMAS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A protest in Madrid last month against Luis Rubiales, who forcibly kissed a World Cup team player.

On Monday afternoon, the National Court issued a note telling reporters that Judge Francisco de Jorge had requested videos from Spanish state television that show the kiss "from all angles."

Minutes after presenting his resignation on Sunday night, Mr. Rubiales posted a statement to X, formerly known as Twitter, saying he did nothing wrong, adding, "I have faith in the truth and I will do everything in my power to make it prevail." If convicted, he faces up to four years in prison.

Some commentators have described the recent events in Spanish football as a watershed moment in Spain's #MeToo movement because they spotlight a divide between traditions of machismo and more recent progressivism that has put Spain in the European vanguard on issues of feminism and equality.

Marta Lois, a spokeswoman for the Sumar group, part of Spain's coalition government, stressed the importance of continuing "to eradicate the structural chauvinism that affects the football institutions in Spain." She said Mr. Rubiales "should have apologized to Jenni Hermoso," and called his not doing so "regrettable."

Though Mr. Rubiales wrote of a campaign to oust him, the president of Spain's National Sports Council, Víctor Francos, said on Monday morning, "Everyone wanted his resignation."

Other prominent Spanish politicians reacted on social media to the news of Mr. Rubiales's resignation. The government's second vice president, Yolanda Díaz, said on X: "The feminist country is advancing ever faster. The transformation and improvement of our lives is inevitable. We're with you, Jenni, and with all women."

Mar Hedo, the communications director for the Spanish public prosecutors office, said that while local prosecutors would look into most sexual assault cases, "when the presumed crime takes place abroad and both victim and presumed aggressor are Spanish," jurisdiction falls to the National Court.

The soccer federation says it will hold elections for a new president, but federation sources said that might take a while. Current regulations permit elections to be held only during Olympic years; the next games are not due to start until summer 2024.

A change in the election schedule requires approval from the National Sports Council, which has said it would do so though it has not received a request.

"What the National Sports Council wants is for elections in the soccer federation to be held as soon as possible," Mr. Francos, its chief, said on Spanish television Monday morning after urging reflection the night before, on a local radio show, "so that certain things that have happened don't happen again."

Kim Has Something Putin Urgently Needs, And That's a New Twist

By PAUL SONNE and VALERIYA SAFRONOVA

When North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, visited President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia four years ago, it was mostly for diplomatic show.

But this week he will visit Mr. Putin a second time with the ability to supply something the Kremlin desperately needs: munitions that could help Russian forces fighting in Ukraine.

The meeting, announced by both governments on Monday, comes as Mr. Putin is courting support for his standoff against the United States and NATO from other leaders opposed to Western dominance. Some, like Iran, have provided direct military assistance to Russia for its war in Ukraine, while others, like India, have resolutely declined to condemn Russian aggression.

An agreement could transform ties and threaten stability.

In a brief statement, the Kremlin said Mr. Kim would "pay an official visit to the Russian Federation in the coming days" at Mr. Putin's invitation. North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency confirmed that Mr. Kim would soon visit Russia for a summit meeting with Mr. Putin but provided no further details.

Neither side said when the meeting would occur, but the two leaders are expected to meet in eastern port city of Vladivostok, where Mr. Putin is attending an economic forum this week.

The last time Mr. Kim visited Russia, he traveled to Vladivostok aboard a slow-moving armored train, the reclusive leader's preferred method of travel during his rare trips out of his country. A train resembling the one he has previously traveled on was spotted heading north on Monday, in the direction of Vladivostok, which is about 700 miles from Pyongyang, the North Korean capital.

Mr. Kim and Mr. Putin are expected to discuss military cooperation between their countries, including the possibility of North Korea's supplying Russia with more weapons for the war in Ukraine, U.S. and allied officials told The New York Times last week. Since last year, U.S. officials have repeatedly said that North Korea has been shipping artillery shells and rockets to Russia.

North Korea is one of the most heavily militarized countries in the world, one that analysts believe has a surplus of ammunition, since it has not fought a war since 1953.

In exchange, officials have said, Mr. Kim would like Russia to provide advanced technology for satellites and nuclear-powered submarines, as well as food aid. If some kind of mutually beneficial agreement is reached, it could transform a relationship that has long been limited to public displays of cooperation, and relatively small amounts of trade, into something more substantive — and, the West warns, more of a threat to global stability.

"If we do see a bargain there, it will be the real end of an era with the relationship that started in 1990," said Fyodor Tertitskiy, a leading researcher at Kookmin University in Seoul.

Since then, Mr. Tertitskiy said, the relationship has been a lot of "talk and no real trade," noting that a deal where Russia provides

POOL PHOTO BY YURI KADOBNOV

North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia in Vladivostok, Russia, in 2019. They are expected to meet there again this week to discuss military cooperation, including a possible bargain on munitions that Russia sorely needs.

North Korea with something of value in exchange for munitions would represent a departure.

North Korea, long hostile to the United States, is a natural ally for Mr. Putin in his standoff with NATO and his fight against what he portrays as Western hegemony.

The Russian leader has also strengthened ties with Iran, making a rare international trip there last year to meet with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, as well as the country's president, amid international isolation of Russia over the invasion.

In the months since, Iran has become a critical supplier of drones to Moscow, which Russian forces have used against Ukraine, both on the battlefield and in attacks on civilian infrastructure.

Mr. Putin has also appeared with President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko of Belarus, who gave Russia access to his country's territory to launch its invasion of Ukraine in February of last year.

The Pentagon said this month that Russia had specifically asked North Korea for ammunition, noting that the request was driven by problems Moscow has been having with replenishing the armaments it needs on the battlefield.

Russia's defense minister, Sergei K. Shoigu, visited North Korea in July on a trip that U.S. officials at the time said was aimed at setting up an arms deal.

North Korea has one of the world's largest armies, despite having a population of only about 26 million. The country operates on a wartime footing at all times, and artillery would be a critical piece of any renewed war with South Korea. The result is a North Korean military with significant stores of artillery shells and production capacity for making them.

Petr Akopov, a pro-war columnist for the Russian state news agency RIA Novosti, suggested in a recent article that Russia could "unofficially" transfer military technology to Pyongyang and welcome North Korean builders into occupied areas of Ukraine, in exchange for ammunition and certain types of missiles.

"All of this is hampered to one degree or another by U.N. Security Council sanctions, but there are always options for circumventing them," Mr. Akopov wrote.

Mr. Akopov added, "The world is changing, and those countries that have challenged the Western world order will not be able to change it by playing by its rules."

CNSAS, ITALIAN ALPINE SPELEOLOGICAL RESCUE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Italian rescuers on Monday with a stretcher carrying Mark Dickey, who leads the New Jersey Initial Response Team.

U.S. Cave Expert Is Rescued After Becoming Ill in Turkey

By KALY SOTO and SAFAK TIMUR

An American cave expert who became ill while he was more than 3,000 feet underground in a cave in Turkey, prompting an international rescue effort, was pulled safely from the cave on Monday and immediately taken to a medical tent, the Speleological Federation of Turkey announced in a statement.

While he was deep underground, the caver, Mark Dickey, 40, who is himself an expert cave rescuer, suffered gastrointestinal bleeding and lost about six pints of blood. He was part of an expedition that was exploring the Morca cave, which he entered on Aug. 30. After he became ill, a member of his party made the harrowing, hourslong climb to the surface and alerted the authorities on Sept. 2.

That drew more than 180 people from eight countries, including Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Poland and the United States, to help rescue him. Many of them camped out in the cave or near its opening in a remote part of the Taurus Mountains in Turkey.

The rescuers began moving Mr. Dickey up the cave on Saturday afternoon, according to the Speleological Federation of Turkey. The teams had to navigate some narrow passages, said Yaman Ozakin, a spokesman affiliated with the Turkish cave rescuers.

The rescue teams installed communications systems, blasted open narrow areas so they could move Mr. Dickey through on a stretcher and used lines set up inside the cave to carry the stretcher out. At one point, Mr. Dickey managed to walk a couple of yards to pass narrow paths, making the rescue effort easier, Mr. Ozakin said.

Food, water, medicine and blood were delivered to the mouth of the cave and carried down by other cavers. Mr. Dickey received intensive medical care, including blood transfusions, while he was underground.

A video shot inside the cave last Wednesday showed Mr. Dickey wearing a red puffy coat and a headlamp.

"As you can see, I'm up, I'm alert, I'm talking," Mr. Dickey said in the video, "but I'm not healed on the inside yet, so I'm going to need a lot of help to get out of here." He said that before medical help arrived, he had felt "very close to the edge."

Mr. Dickey lives in New York State, but he leads the New Jersey Initial Response Team based in Sussex County, N.J. In a post on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter, Gov. Phil Murphy of New Jersey said that he had been in touch with Turkish officials about Mr. Dickey's rescue.

Rescue workers said that Mr. Dickey had been with two people when he fell ill. Other members of the 14-person expedition were elsewhere in the cave system, or waiting to enter, at the time.

Trained in saving people, a caver needed help himself.

The Morca cave, which is mainly made of limestone, is the third deepest in Turkey, with a depth of 4,186 feet, according to the Turkish federation. It is more than 13,000 feet long.

The European Cave Rescue Association said in a statement that Mr. Dickey was a highly trained caver and a well-known figure in the international community of speleologists, or cave experts, who had participated in many expeditions around the world.

He is also a senior member of the European Cave Rescue Association's medical committee and an instructor for cave rescue organizations in the United States, according to the statement.

U.S. Seeks to Bring Home Americans Trapped in Syria

By CHARLIE SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — The State Department is working to repatriate a family of 10 American citizens stranded in Syria, where they are among the tens of thousands of people effectively imprisoned in desert camps and detention centers from the war against the Islamic State, according to officials.

The transfer would make them the largest group brought back to the United States from northeastern Syria, where they are being held by a Kurdish-led militia. The American government has repatriated 40 such citizens since 2016 — 25 children and 15 adults, according to the State Department.

The group consists of Brandy Salman, 49, and nine of her children, who range in age from about 6 to about 25, all of whom appear to have been born in the United States. Ms. Salman's husband, who was from Turkey, seems to have taken her and their children into Islamic State territory around 2016 and was apparently later killed.

The detention centers in northeastern Syria typically hold the families of suspected Islamic State militants. Much remains unclear about the family's interactions with the group before the collapse of the so-called caliphate.

That ambiguity, and the apparent delay in identifying them as Americans, reflects a broader, festering and complicated problem: Many countries have left their own citizens stranded in these camps, out of fear and uncertainty. One result is that tens of thousands of children are growing up there under brutal conditions and are vulnerable to radicalization.

According to the account of one of the Salman children, a son who is now about 17, the family was taken into custody at Baghuz, where the Islamic State's last major enclave fell in early 2019. Camp guards separated him from his mother several years ago under a disputed policy of removing adolescent boys.

It is not clear what the authorities intend to do with Ms. Salman, or where and how her family will be resettled. Some adults who traveled to Syria to join ISIS and were later brought back to the United States have faced prosecution on charges like conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism, while others have not.

Her sister, Rebecca Jean Harris, of Murfreesboro, Tenn., said in an interview that about four years ago, F.B.I. agents came to her house to ask about her sister. Ms. Harris added that Ms. Salman, informed about that visit by text, cut off communications.

Public records show that Ms. Salman has lived in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York City and Michigan. Ms. Salman's father, Stephen R. Caravalho, of

DELIL SOULEIMAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

A Kurdish-led force at Camp Roj in Syria is holding about 2,400 people, the State Department said. Another camp holds 50,000.

Hot Springs, Ark., said in an interview that the family had had only sporadic contact with her for years, and that he last saw her in person during a visit to New York around 2006.

The Kurdish-led militia, known as the Syrian Democratic Forces, or S.D.F., has been the United States' main ally in the region battling the Islamic State. It has been stuck holding about 60,000 people — most from Iraq and Syria, but about 10,000 from about 60 other countries — even though it is not a sovereign government.

The situation is messy for many reasons. The S.D.F. does not have comprehensive and accurate records about all the people it is holding. Many nations, particularly in Europe, have been reluctant to allow their citizens to return, especially men suspected of being militants. Among other concerns, some fear that under their legal systems, any incarceration would last only a few years.

Even children who were taken to the Islamic State by their parents are frequently stigmatized. About 50,000 displaced people, mainly women and children, live in the largest camp, Al Hol, where by some estimates half its population is under 12.

The United States has campaigned for other nations to ease the problem by taking back their citizens, as it says it does, and has offered to help. Last month, for example, it flew 95 women and children to Kyrgyzstan.

Given the United States' stance, it is unclear why the Salman family was not taken out of Syria long ago, said Letta Tayler, a researcher for Human Rights Watch who interviewed one of the Salman children, the son who is now about 17, in May 2022 at Houry, a center for teenage boys. She said she told the State Department about him in November.

"It's great that the U.S. is acting to take back this family, but why did it take so long given the horrific conditions that these U.S. citizens were subjected to?" she said. "That's a question that deserves an answer from the U.S. government."

Asked about the apparent delay, Ian Moss, a deputy coordinator for counterterrorism at the State Department, demurred but noted that it can be difficult to identify definitively who is in Syria and where they come from.

"Whenever we find Americans, we work as fast as we can to get them out," he said.

In meeting with Ms. Salman and five of her children at one of the camps in July, Mr. Moss said, she expressed her desire to return to the United States with her entire family, and his office has been working on repatriating them.

Fionnuala Ni Aolain, the United Nations special rapporteur on counterterrorism and human rights, interviewed the same teenage boy in July. Both shared notes from their conversations with him on the condition that The New York Times not print his name. The Times was unable to independently verify all the details in his account.

A woman and her children were taken to Islamic State territory.

In about 2016, when he was around 9 and in Turkey, according to the boy's account to Ms. Tayler, his father told the family that they were going camping. After several days of travel, his father revealed that they were in Syria.

There, his mother largely kept the children inside because she was afraid, according to notes of the boy's account.

When the Kurdish-led militia took the family into custody at Baghuz, it sent his older brother, then about 17, to a men's prison, the notes say, separating him from his family. That brother, now about 21, is still alive, according to an official.

The younger teenager, who is now himself about 17, lived with his mother and other siblings at Al Hol until early 2020. One day, at a marketplace area in Al Hol, guards seized the boy and several other teenagers without notifying their families or letting them collect their belongings, according to notes of his account.

He was held in what was apparently a latrine for about a month before being moved to the Houry center, which is sometimes described as a rehabilitation or deradicalization center for youths.

Human Rights Watch featured the boy — obscuring his face and using a pseudonym — in a video about children stranded after their parents took them to Syria to join ISIS. In it, he said: "It's not only me. We a lot of kids, you know. No one wants to stay, just like growing up here doing nothing. That's what we all feeling."

Ms. Ni Aolain, who is also a law professor, published a United Nations report after her visit to Syria that portrays the policy of "the forced arbitrary separation of hundreds of adolescent boys" from their mothers as a systematic violation of human rights. (Human Rights Watch has also criticized that policy.)

"Every woman she spoke with identified the snatching and disappearance of their juvenile and adolescent boys as their main concern," the report said, adding that other boys she interviewed described their sudden removals as "violent and causing them extreme anxiety, as well as mental and psychological suffering."

Officials with the militia have defended the practice on several grounds, saying that it reduces the risk of pregnancies in the camps and that young men will be indoctrinated by women who are still members of the Islamic State.

Over 3,000 people were repatriated from the S.D.F.'s custody last year, more than in the previous three years combined, and 2,500 more have been taken back by their home countries so far this year, the State Department said.

Still, about 9,000 adult male detainees remain imprisoned, about 2,000 of whom come from countries other than Iraq or Syria. Of the 50,000 residents of Al Hol, about 7,500 are from third countries, the department said. A smaller camp, Roj, has about 2,400 people, it said, and there are a few hundred teenage boys in the youth centers.

Since he was taken to the Houry center, the teenager told Ms. Tayler in May 2022 that an older sister had twice visited him, and that he had occasionally exchanged letters with his mother through the Red Cross.

In her interview with the boy, Ms. Ni Aolain said he expressed "great distress and worry" about his inability to communicate meaningfully with his mother. He also talked about hamburgers and missing rap music, she said.

"He seemed like a teenaged boy, except he happened to be a teenaged boy in this extraordinarily coercive and structurally abusive situation," she said.

Kitty Bennett contributed research.

Some in G.O.P. Oppose Ukraine Aid Even as Districts Benefit

By KAROUN DEMIRJIAN

MESQUITE, Texas — By early next year, this city best known for being the rodeo capital of Texas is on track to become a centerpiece of the American effort to increase artillery production vital to the war in Ukraine.

A hulking new plant going up next to a highway exchange not far from downtown Mesquite promises to nearly double current U.S. output, replenishing stockpiles and preparing more ammunition to beat back the Russian invasion.

For a city in the midst of engineering an economic renaissance, the General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems factory is a major boon. It is expected to employ a minimum of 125 people; bring business opportunities to local suppliers, retailers and restaurants; and, city officials hope, potentially help turn the area into an industrial hotbed of well-paying jobs.

None of that appears to have persuaded Representative Lance Gooden, the Republican whose district will house the new plant, to support continuing U.S. aid to Kyiv. Over the summer, he joined dozens of his G.O.P. House colleagues in calling for an end to American support for Ukraine's fight, voting for measures to strip $300 million in security assistance for the war-torn country from next year's defense budget and prohibit Congress from approving any more funds for the conflict.

His opposition and that of many others in his party has imperiled President Biden's request for $24 billion in additional funding for the war, threatening to derail an emergency spending bill that lawmakers in both parties are working to push through Congress this month.

It reflects how the "America First" mentality popularized by former President Donald J. Trump has spread and intensified among Republicans, prompting increasing numbers of lawmakers — including some whose constituents benefit directly from continued American aid to Ukraine — to refuse to keep supporting it. And it is one major driver of the spending showdowns to come this fall as lawmakers toil to reach agreement on both the routine annual spending bills and an extra package of aid for crises at home and abroad.

Mr. Gooden's office did not respond to repeated requests for comment. But opponents of the Ukrainian assistance programs have argued that the United States must disentangle itself from a faraway war and instead focus the government's attention and money on problems closer to home.

Speaker Kevin McCarthy, who had said he backed continued funding for Ukraine, now appears to be bowing to the resistance on the right. He is considering dropping the aid for Kyiv and pushing through a $16 billion package of emergency disaster aid for states coupled with more money for border security.

The situation has dismayed some local business leaders in Mesquite, who — while taking pains not to criticize any politicians by name — say the opposition of some lawmakers to the funding measure is a slap in their constituents' faces.

"I would love for them to talk about, 'Hey, this will create manufacturing jobs in the U.S., this will create advanced manufacturing jobs in the U.S.," Alexander Helgar, the president of the Mesquite Chamber of Commerce, said in an interview in his office. Lawmakers who oppose continued aid to Kyiv are effectively "voting against your constituents, at that point," he said. "You're literally saying no to the people you're representing."

The rush to arm Ukraine, combined with Kyiv's seemingly insatiable need for weapons and ammunition, has prompted a defense production bonanza in the United States, as officials have scrambled to replenish inventories and build reserves better equipped to sustain Ukraine and respond to similar conflicts in the future.

Since Russia's invasion, Congress has approved approximately $43 billion in security assistance for Ukraine, alongside other investments in the defense industrial base. The funds have injected new life, in the form of government contracts, into factories across the country, including Abrams tank production lines in Lima, Ohio; Javelin missile factories in Ocala, Fla., and Troy, Ala.; and a plant that makes the propulsion motors for guided multiple-launch rockets in Rocket Center, W.Va.

But while lawmakers representing those facilities have welcomed the windfall, they have voted to curtail the funding that made it possible.

"We're proud that they're made in Ohio's Fourth District," Representative Jim Jordan, the Republican whose district includes the Lima Army Tank Plant, said of the Abrams tanks, "but our constituents have great concerns about seemingly unlimited taxpayer money being used to fund the war in Ukraine, especially when Americans are struggling at home with rising inflation and places like East Palestine and Maui continue to be ignored by the Biden administration."

Their stance breaks with decades of bipartisan support for feeding the military-industrial complex. Nowhere is that disconnect more apparent than in Mesquite. The city had no foothold in the defense industry before the Ukraine war created skyrocketing demand for 155-millimeter shells, the ammunition fired from howitzers, long-range weapons central to the artillery battles that have defined much of the conflict.

The U.S. government plans to expand 155-millimeter shell production from pre-Ukraine-war levels of less than 15,000 per month to 90,000 per month, and Mesquite's plant is expected to contribute about 20,000 toward that goal once it comes online in early 2024.

The city invested over $1 million in land and water line costs to attract the General Dynamics plant, while the local power company built a new substation to meet its electrical needs. It was all part of an effort to attract higher-skilled production industries offering wages that would encourage residents of this fast-growing city to work and spend money in Mesquite, where, despite a recent proliferation of housing developments and major corporations opening warehouse distribution hubs, empty storefronts still dot blocks of the historic downtown.

"You do see small businesses benefit when these larger businesses come to the community," said Kim Buttram, the director of economic development for the City of Mesquite. Advanced manufacturing companies like General Dynamics, she added, also "offer our citizens, our students, our folks, opportunities to up-skill and better their career opportunities close to home."

To that end, the city has made a point of promoting vocational training programs through the public secondary schools and the local community college, to prove to similar companies that there is a ready work force waiting to be tapped. City officials hope the General Dynamics plant as well as a large Canadian Solar panel production facility and a truck and auto vehicle accessory plant that are expected to begin operations this year will be models for how advanced manufacturing firms can thrive in Mesquite, helping the community flourish in the process.

But much depends on what happens in Washington.

The Army has already announced that it plans to spend almost $1 billion on 155-millimeter artillery rounds over the next five years. But while the Army's ordnance contracts are multiyear commitments, they are not permanent purchase orders — and their long-term durability depends on Congress's continued willingness to fund production, even once the new stockpile quotas have been reached.

"All this is subject to appropriation, and it is not at all certain that this level of appropriation will continue for the whole time it would take to reach an inventory," said Bradley Martin, the director of the National Security Supply Chain Institute at the RAND Corporation.

As Congress gets closer to a reckoning over continuing Ukraine funding, Republican supporters of the war have begun to point to places like Mesquite to bolster their argument for keeping the aid flowing.

"The money we're talking about doesn't go to Ukraine; it goes to defense manufacturing facilities all across America and supports tens of thousands of American jobs," Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the minority leader, said on the floor last week. "Critics of this investment cannot ignore its returns. American industry and workers are stronger for it, our war fighters are stronger for it and our nation is stronger for it."

Mesquite city officials, who are careful to sidestep politics when they discuss economic development projects, frame the sudden connection between their fortunes and those of the Ukrainians a bit more delicately.

"We don't want to say we're profiting off of a conflict like that — we're not feeling any of the effects of war," said Cliff Keheley, Mesquite's city manager. "But at the same time, it's a global scale of the economy, and that generates a need."

"At the end of the day, somebody's got to do these jobs," Ms. Buttram added. "It might as well be us."

John Ismay contributed reporting from Washington.

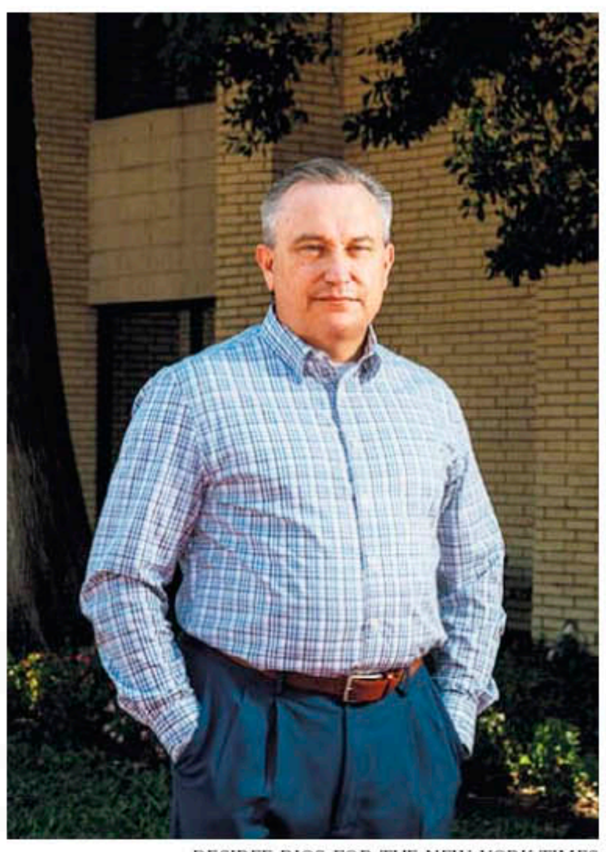
DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, the construction site of a new General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems building in Mesquite, Texas. The plant could help turn the area into an industrial hotbed of well-paying jobs. Right, a subdivision being built in the city.

DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"Small businesses benefit when these larger businesses come to the community," said Kim Buttram, above, the director of economic development for Mesquite. Below, Cliff Keheley, the city manager, has been careful to sidestep politics.

DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

'At the end of the day, somebody's got to do these jobs. It might as well be us.'

CLIFF KEHELEY, Mesquite's city manager.

DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

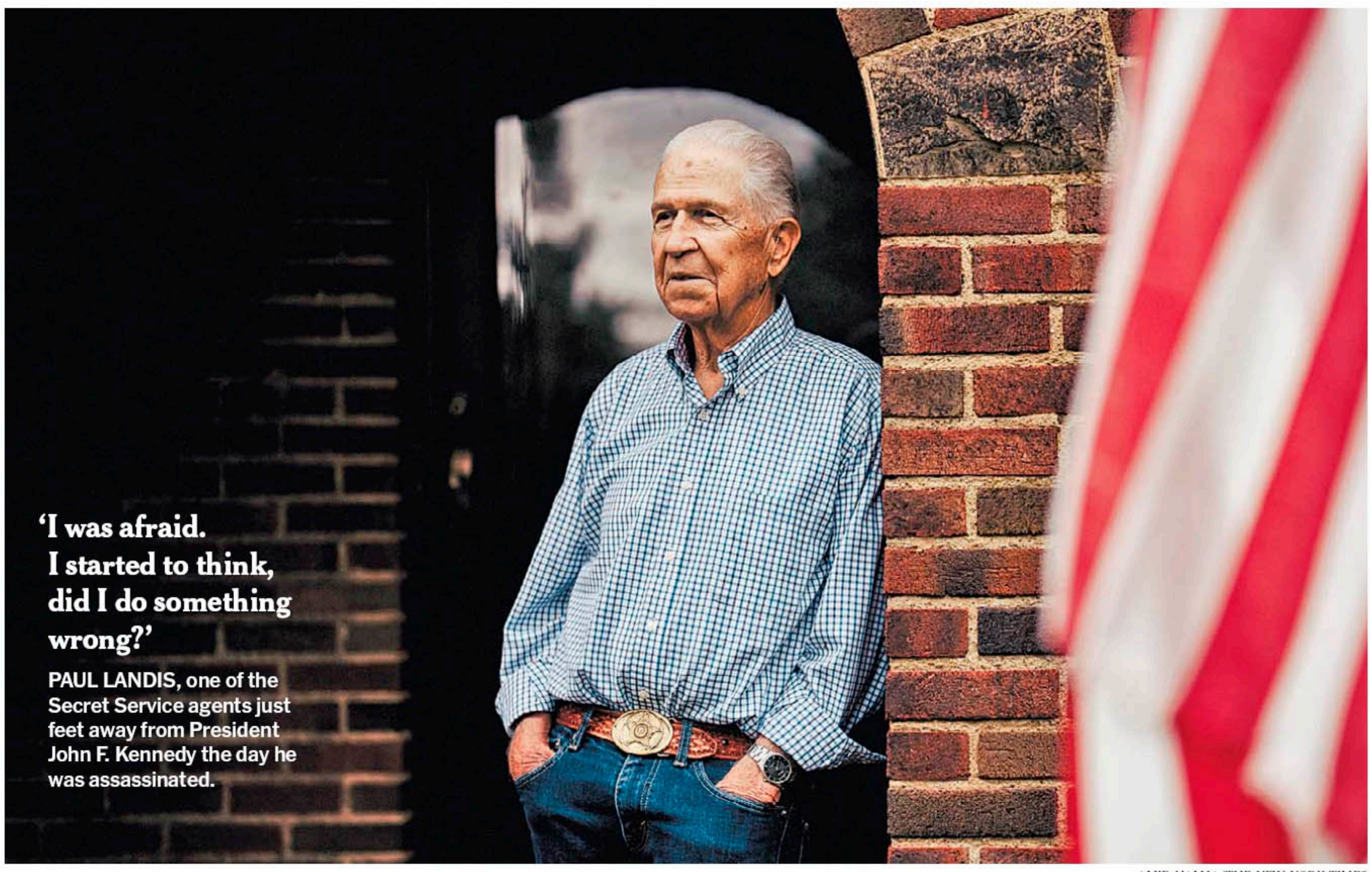
Businesses and vacant buildings in downtown Mesquite. Officials hope the plant will bring business opportunities to local suppliers, retailers and restaurants.

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Lance Gooden, who represents the district in Congress, has joined dozens of his Republican colleagues in calling for an end to U.S. support for Ukraine.

J.F.K. Assassination Witness Breaks Silence and Raises New Questions

By PETER BAKER



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JUSTIN NEWMAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clockwise from top: Former Secret Service agent Paul Landis at home in Cleveland. A police officer with a rifle found in the Texas School Book Depository. The blood-stained presidential limousine. Secret Service agent Clint Hill climbed onto the limousine after the shooting. President John F. Kennedy's coffin. Mr. Landis identifying himself in a photo from the day of the president's funeral.

CLEVELAND — He still remembers the first gunshot. For an instant, standing on the running board of the motorcade car, he entertained the vain hope that maybe it was just a firecracker or a blown tire. But he knew guns and he knew better. Then came another shot. And another. And the president slumped down.

For so many nights afterward, he relived that grisly moment in his dreams. Now, 60 years later, Paul Landis, one of the Secret Service agents just feet away from President John F. Kennedy on that fateful day in Dallas, is telling his story in full for the first time. And in at least one key respect, his account differs from the official version in a way that may change the understanding of what happened in Dealey Plaza.

Mr. Landis has spent most of the intervening years fleeing history, trying to forget that unforgettable moment etched in the consciousness of a grieving nation. The memory of the explosion of violence and the desperate race to the hospital and the devastating flight home and the wrenching funeral with John Jr. saluting his fallen father — it was all too much, too torturous, so much so that Mr. Landis left the service and Washington behind.

Until finally, after the nightmares had passed at last, he could think about it again. And he could read about it. And he realized that what he read was not quite right, not as he remembered it. As it turns out, if his recollections are correct, the much-discussed "magic bullet" may not have been so magic after all.

His memory challenges the theory advanced by the Warren Commission that has been the subject of so much speculation and debate over the years — that one of the bullets fired at the president's limousine hit not only Kennedy but Gov. John B. Connally Jr. of Texas, who was riding with him, in multiple places.

Mr. Landis's account, included in a forthcoming memoir, would rewrite the narrative of one of modern American history's most earth-shattering days in an important way. It may not mean any more than that. But it could also encourage those who have long suspected that there was more than one gunman in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, adding new grist to one of the nation's enduring mysteries.

As with all things related to the assassination, of course, his account raises questions of its own. Mr. Landis remained silent for 60 years, which has fueled doubts even for his former Secret Service partner, and memories are tricky even for those sincerely certain of their recollections. A couple elements of his account contradict the official statements he filed with authorities immediately after the shooting, and some of the implications of his version cannot be easily reconciled to the existing record.

But he was there, a firsthand witness, and it is rare for new testimony to emerge six decades after the fact. He has never subscribed to the conspiracy theories and stresses that he is not promoting one now. At age 88, he said, all he wants is to tell what he saw and what he did. He will leave it to everyone else to draw conclusions.

"There's no goal at this point," he said in an interview last month in Cleveland, the first time he has talked about this with a reporter in advance of his book, "The Final Witness," which will be published by Chicago Review Press on Oct. 10. "I just think it had been long enough that I needed to tell my story."

What it comes down to is a copper-jacketed 6.5-millimeter projectile. The Warren Commission decided that one of the bullets fired that day struck the president from behind, exited from the front of his throat and continued on to hit Mr. Connally, somehow managing to injure his back, chest, wrist and thigh. It seemed incredible that a single bullet could do all that, so skeptics called it the magic bullet theory.

Investigators came to that conclusion partly because the bullet was found on a stretcher believed to have held Mr. Connally at Parkland Memorial Hospital, so they assumed it had exited his body during efforts to save his life. But Mr. Landis, who was never interviewed by the Warren Commission, said that is not what happened.

In fact, he said, he was the one who found the bullet — and he found it not in the hospital near Mr. Connally but in the presidential limousine lodged in the back of the seat behind where Kennedy was sitting.

When he spotted the bullet after the motorcade arrived at the hospital, he said he grabbed it to thwart souvenir hunters. Then, for reasons that still seem fuzzy even to him, he said he entered the hospital and placed it next to Kennedy on the president's stretcher, assuming it could somehow help doctors figure out what happened. At some point, he now guesses, the stretchers must have been pushed together and the bullet was shaken from one to another.

"There was nobody there to secure the scene, and that was a big, big bother to me," Mr. Landis said. "All the agents that were there were focused on the president." A crowd was gathering. "This was all going on so quickly. And I was just afraid that — it was a piece of evidence, that I realized right away. Very important. And I didn't want it to disappear or get lost. So it was, 'Paul, you've got to make a decision,' and I grabbed it."

Mr. Landis theorizes that the bullet struck Kennedy in the back but for some reason was undercharged and did not penetrate deeply, therefore popping back out before the president's body was removed from the limousine.

Mr. Landis has been reluctant to speculate on the larger implications. He always believed that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman. But now? "At this point, I'm beginning to doubt myself," he said. "Now I begin to wonder." That is as far as he is willing to go.

A native of Ohio and son of a college sports coach, Mr. Landis does not come across as a swaggering security agent. He had to stretch to meet the 5-foot-8 height requirement when he joined the service, and could no longer do so.

In recent years, he confided his story with several key figures, including Lewis C. Merletti, a former director of the Secret Service. James Robenalt, a Cleveland lawyer and author of several books of history, has deeply researched the assassination and helped Mr. Landis process his memories.

"If what he says is true, which I tend to believe, it is likely to reopen the question of a second shooter, if not even more," Mr. Robenalt said. "If the bullet we know as the magic or pristine bullet stopped in President Kennedy's back, it means that the central thesis of the Warren Report, the single-bullet theory, is wrong." And if Mr. Connally was hit by a separate bullet, he added, then it seemed possible it was not from Oswald, who he argued could not have reloaded that fast.

Mr. Merletti, who has been friendly with Mr. Landis for a decade, was not sure what to think about his account. "I don't know if that story's true or not, but I do know that the agents that were there that day, they were tormented for years by what happened," he said in an interview.

Mr. Merletti referred Mr. Landis to Ken Gormley, the president of Duquesne University and a prominent presidential historian, who helped him find an agent for his book. In an interview, Mr. Gormley said he was not surprised that a traumatized agent would come forward all these years later, comparing it to a dying declaration in legal cases.

"It's very common as people get to the end of their lives," Mr. Gormley said. "They want to make peace with things. They want to get on the table things they've been holding back, especially if it's a piece of history and they want the record corrected. This does not look like a play by someone trying to get attention for himself or money. I don't read it that way at all. I think he firmly believes this. Whether it fits together, I don't know. But people can eventually figure that out."

Mr. Landis's account varies in a couple of respects from two written statements he filed in the week after the shooting. Aside from not mentioning finding the bullet, he reported hearing only two shots. "I do not recall hearing a third shot," he wrote. Likewise, he did not mention going into the trauma room where Kennedy was taken, writing that he "remained outside by the door" when the first lady went in.

Gerald Posner, author of "Case Closed," a 1993 book that concluded that Oswald indeed killed Kennedy on his own, said he was dubious. While he did not question Mr. Landis's sincerity, Mr. Posner said the story did not add up.

"People's memories generally do not improve over time, and it is a flashing warning sign to me, about skepticism I have over his story, that on some very important details of the assassination, including the number of shots, his memory has gotten better instead of worse," he said.

"Even assuming that he is accurately describing what happened with the bullet," Mr. Posner added, "it might mean nothing more than we now know that the bullet that came out of Governor Connally did so in the limousine, not on a stretcher in Parkland where it was found."

> His recollections challenge the 'magic bullet' theory.

Mr. Landis said the reports he filed after the assassination included mistakes; he was in shock and had barely slept for five days as he focused on helping the first lady through the ordeal, he said, and not paying enough attention to what he submitted. He did not think to mention the bullet, he said.

It was not until 2014 that he realized that the official account of the bullet differed from his memory, he said, but he did not come forward then out of a feeling that he had made a mistake in putting it on the stretcher without telling anyone in that pre-C.S.I., secure-the-crime-scene era.

"I didn't want to talk about it," Mr. Landis said. "I was afraid. I started to think, did I do something wrong? There was a fear that I might have done something wrong and I shouldn't talk about it."

Indeed, his partner, Clint Hill, the legendary Secret Service agent who clambered onto the back of the speeding limousine in a futile effort to save Kennedy, discouraged Mr. Landis from speaking out. "Many ramifications," Mr. Hill warned in a 2014 email that Mr. Landis saved and shared last month.

Mr. Hill, who has set out his own account of what happened in multiple books and interviews, cast doubt on Mr. Landis's version on Friday. "I believe it raises concerns when the story he is telling now, 60 years after the fact, is different than the statements he wrote in the days following the tragedy" and told in subsequent years, Mr. Hill said in an email. "In my mind, there are serious inconsistencies in his various statements/stories."

Mr. Landis's rendezvous with history began in the small town of Worthington, Ohio, north of Columbus. After college and a stint in the Ohio Air National Guard, he was working in a clothing store when a family friend described his job in the Secret Service. Intrigued, Mr. Landis joined in 1959 in the Cincinnati office, where he chased thieves who swiped Social Security checks out of mailboxes.

A year later, he was sent to Washington where he joined the protective detail for President Dwight D. Eisenhower's grandchildren. After Kennedy was elected, Mr. Landis, code named Debut because of his youth, was assigned to guard the new president's children and later the first lady, Jacqueline Kennedy, alongside Mr. Hill. Because the first lady accompanied her husband to Dallas that fall day in 1963, Mr. Landis, then 28, was part of the motorcade, riding the rear of the right running board on the black Cadillac convertible, code named Halfback, just feet behind the presidential limousine.

At the first shot, Mr. Landis turned to look over his right shoulder in the direction of the sound but spotted nothing. Then he turned to the limousine and saw Kennedy raising his arms, evidently hit. Suddenly, Mr. Landis noticed that Mr. Hill had leapt off their follow-up car and was sprinting toward the limousine. Mr. Landis thought about doing the same but did not have an angle.

He said he heard a second shot that sounded louder and finally the fatal third shot that hit Kennedy in the head. Mr. Landis had to duck to avoid being splattered by flesh and brain matter. He knew instantly that the president was dead. Mr. Hill, now on the back of the limousine, turned back and confirmed it with a thumbs down.

Once they reached the hospital, Mr. Hill and Mr. Landis coaxed the distraught first lady to let go of her husband so he could be taken inside. After they exited the car, Mr. Landis noticed two bullet fragments in a pool of blood. He fingered one of them but put it back.

That's when he said he noticed the intact bullet in the seam of the tufted dark leather cushioning. He said he slipped it into his coat pocket and headed into the hospital, where he planned to give it to a supervisor, but in the confusion instinctively put it on Kennedy's stretcher instead.

The hospital's senior engineer later found it when he was moving Mr. Connally's stretcher, by then empty, and bumped it against another stretcher in the hall, resulting in the bullet falling out.

The Warren Commission report said that it "eliminated President Kennedy's stretcher as a source of the bullet" because the president remained on his stretcher while doctors tried to save his life and was not removed until his body was placed in a coffin.

Investigators determined that the bullet, designated Commission Exhibit 399, was fired by the same C2766 Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found in the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. They concluded that the bullet passed through Kennedy, then entered Mr. Connally's right shoulder, struck his rib, exited under his right nipple, continued through his right wrist and into his left thigh.

Doctors concurred that the single bullet could have caused all the damage. But the bullet was described as nearly pristine and had lost only one or two grains of its original 160 or 161 grains in weight, causing skeptics to doubt that it could have done all that the commission said it had. Still, ballistic experts using modern forensic techniques concluded at the 50th anniversary of the assassination that the single-bullet theory was perfectly plausible.

Mr. Landis said he was surprised that the Warren Commission never interviewed him, but assumed that his supervisors were protecting the agents, who had been out late the night before socializing (Mr. Landis until 5 a.m., although he insisted they were not drunk). "Nobody really asked me," he said.

Many pictures of those days of mourning show Mr. Landis at Jacqueline Kennedy's side as she endured the rituals of a presidential farewell. Night after night, those seconds of violence in Dallas kept replaying in his head, his own personal Zapruder film on an endless loop. "The president's head exploding — I could not shake that vision," he said. "Whatever I was doing, that's all I was thinking about."

With Mr. Landis and Mr. Hill still protecting her, the former first lady was in constant motion in the months afterward. "She'd be in the back seat sobbing and you'd want to say something but it wasn't really our place to say anything," Mr. Landis recalled.

After six months, he could not take it anymore and left the Secret Service. For decades, he made a living in real estate and machine products and house painting, anything as long as it had nothing to do with protecting presidents.

He was generally aware of the conspiracy theories, yet never read a book about them, or the Warren Commission report for that matter. "I just paid no attention to that," he said. "I just removed myself. I just felt I had been there. I had seen it, and I knew what I saw and what I did. And that's all."

He did a few interviews in 2010 and thereafter, but never mentioned finding the bullet. Then, in 2014, a local police chief he knew gave him a copy of "Six Seconds in Dallas," a 1967 book by Josiah Thompson arguing that there were multiple shooters. Mr. Landis read it and believed the official account of the bullet was wrong.

That led to conversations with Mr. Merletti and Mr. Gormley and eventually, after many years, to his book.

It was not easy. As he finished the manuscript, he stared at the computer screen, broke down and cried uncontrollably. "I didn't realize that I had so many suppressed emotions and feelings," he said. "I just couldn't stop. And that was just a huge emotional relief."

Likening Google's Antitrust Trial to Microsoft's

From Page A1

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bill Gates testified on Capitol Hill in 1998, the same year Microsoft faced a federal antitrust trial.

organization covered it. The New York Times reported on the proceedings daily.

It was a trial that often dealt with cerebral concepts like "network effects" and "switching costs." Yet The Times gave it the kind of day-to-day coverage ordinarily reserved for very few courtroom dramas over the years, like the O.J. Simpson trial and the Lindbergh kidnapping trial.

Many days, there were spin sessions on the courthouse steps. Microsoft representatives would say the government had presented isolated snippets of text, taken out of context, certainly not proof of anti-competitive conduct. Lawyers for the Justice Department and states who joined the lawsuit would mostly say the damning testimony spoke for itself.

Microsoft was found by a federal judge to have repeatedly violated the nation's antitrust laws. An appeals court upheld most of that decision but was skeptical of the government's preferred remedy — breaking up the company.

In its lawsuit against Google, the Justice Department points to the Microsoft case and that company's tactics in the 1990s. "Google deploys the same playbook," the government declares, by illegally wielding its might in online search much as Microsoft did with its personal computer operating system, Windows.

But Kent Walker, Google's president of global affairs, said there were big differences between the Microsoft of the dot-com boom and today's Google. Back then, Mr. Walker was deputy general counsel of Netscape, the commercial pioneer of internet browsing software, which was the main target of Microsoft's campaign to hobble competition.

About 90 percent of personal computers used Microsoft's Windows software, the main gateway to the young internet, and Microsoft controlled the software and services that were featured on those Windows PC screens.

Google, on the other hand, has to work with and pay partners that make smartphones, browsers and other devices, Mr. Walker said. Its deals with companies like Apple and Samsung to make Google the default search engine on their smartphones are legal and benefit consumers, giving them the best technology and reducing costs for device makers and their customers, he said.

"We think there are aspects of the Microsoft case that are actually very helpful to us here," Mr. Walker said in an interview.

When the Microsoft trial started, it was the high tide of early internet euphoria. E-commerce was just getting underway, and every industry wanted to jump on the digital bandwagon. This was before mobile computing. The first Blackberry, essentially an email device, was introduced in 1999. The iPhone, which started the smartphone era, didn't arrive until 2007. If you wanted to get online, chances are you did it through a computer that ran Windows.

Microsoft was rich, powerful and ambitious. It had started to move beyond software. In 1996, it entered the media business in a partnership with NBC, setting up the cable channel, MSNBC, and a website, msnbc.com (Microsoft shed its stakes in both, years later).

Executives in industry after industry worried about what Microsoft might do next, sharing a sentiment expressed by Rupert Murdoch, chairman of News Corp: "Everybody in the communications business is paranoid of Microsoft, including me."

Today, Google does not loom as large as Microsoft once did. It is one member of the Big Tech club. It is an undisputed giant in search and online advertising, and its software and artificial intelligence prowess can extend to other industries. But its Big Tech peers — Amazon, Apple, Meta (Facebook) and even Microsoft — are all under scrutiny in the United States and abroad.

The Microsoft case also had a huge personal dimension because of the stature of Mr. Gates. He was the world's richest person, and during the course of the trial, as the stock market surged, Mr. Gates's stake in Microsoft soared to $100 billion. In 1995, a researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology built a website, called the Bill Gates Personal Wealth Clock, to track Mr. Gates's net worth.

Mr. Gates was widely admired as a brilliant entrepreneur, polls showed. He was Microsoft's leader, deeply involved in company operations and especially its internet strategy. He viewed the government's antitrust pursuit as an assault on his life's work, colleagues said.

Mr. Gates was not a witness at the trial, but excerpts from his videotaped deposition testimony were shown. He was quibbling, unresponsive and forgetful. At one point, he seemed not to understand the term "market share." (The joke immediately afterward was that "share" was the concept he didn't grasp.)

Later, Microsoft officials said Mr. Gates had merely been following legal advice he was given to narrow questions and avoid broad or responsive answers. If so, it was bad advice. His deposition testimony undermined his credibility — and Microsoft's — with the judge.

Despite its search dominance, Google does not loom as large as Microsoft did.

Google's founders, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, have a far less prominent role in the current case. They are no longer deeply involved in the company. Sundar Pichai, the chief executive of Google's parent company, Alphabet, is a thoughtful, soft-spoken company man who joined Google in 2004 and rose through the ranks.

Although the legal theory advanced by the Justice Department mirrors the one used in the Microsoft case, the outcome of the trial will hinge on the evidence presented to Judge Amit P. Mehta of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

The government has already suggested its evidence will lack the vivid language of the Microsoft case. There is no equivalent of "cut off Netscape's air supply" or piles of email filled with no-holds-barred terminology.

In the Google suit, the government cited the search company's instructions to its employees to avoid words like "kill," "crush" and "block" in their emails.

"Google did learn one thing from Microsoft — to choose its words carefully to avoid antitrust scrutiny," the Justice Department wrote.

For its part, the government has understandably borrowed heavily from the Microsoft case in its lawsuit against Google because those legal theories "worked so well against Microsoft," said William Kovacic, a law professor at George Washington University and former chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.

After the George W. Bush administration came to power, the Justice Department and Microsoft reached a settlement. The resulting consent decree prohibited Microsoft from imposing restrictive contracts, freed PC makers to load and feature other companies' software and forced Microsoft to disclose more technical information.

Many people criticized the consent decree as toothless. David Yoffie, a professor at the Harvard Business School, was initially a critic, but his views have changed.

Today, Mr. Yoffie teaches a course on antitrust and technology, and it begins with the Microsoft consent decree. "There were a litany of actions that were no longer possible because of the consent decree," he said. "It did limit Microsoft's ability to go after newcomers, not ones trying to compete with Microsoft head-on but at an angle."

The leading beneficiary of the more open environment, Mr. Yoffie said, was an internet search start-up, with new technology and later a new business model. It was called Google. It was founded in September 1998, one month before the Microsoft trial began.

Guide to Key Figures Inside the Courtroom At an Antitrust Trial

By CECILIA KANG

WASHINGTON — A trial to determine if Google abused its monopoly in online search, which begins on Tuesday, is set to lay bare how the internet search giant cemented its power, featuring testimony from top tech executives, engineers, economists and academics.

The trial will unfold in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, where a core group of individuals will command the courtroom and direct the day-to-day legal strategies. Here are the key people to know in U.S. et al. v. Google:

From federal court

Judge Amit P. Mehta

Judge Mehta, who was appointed to the bench in 2014 by President Barack Obama, will referee and decide the case in the nonjury trial.

In more than three years of pretrial hearings, Judge Mehta hasn't tipped his hand on his views of the case. In a proceeding last month, he narrowed the lawsuit by the Justice Department and states while preserving the core argument that Google maintained its monopoly in search through deals with smartphone makers that cut out competitors.

Judge Mehta, 52, was randomly assigned to U.S. et al. v. Google. He may be more familiar with Google than other federal judges, whose average age reached 69 in 2020, according to a study at the time by The Ohio State Law Journal. He received his law degree from the University of Virginia in 1997, a year before Larry Page and Sergey Brin founded Google.

Judge Mehta previously worked in private practice in San Francisco and Washington, focusing on white-collar criminal defense, complex business disputes and appellate advocacy.

For the plaintiffs

Jonathan Kanter, assistant attorney general for antitrust at the Justice Department

Mr. Kanter, the top antitrust official at the Justice Department, is overseeing the government's case.

President Biden appointed Mr. Kanter, a longtime tech and media lawyer who received his law degree from Washington University in St. Louis, to the Justice Department in July 2021. Mr. Kanter is among a group of progressive Big Tech critics whom Mr. Biden has placed in top government positions for antitrust enforcement. He inherited the Google case from the Trump administration.

Mr. Kanter, 50, is also overseeing a separate antitrust lawsuit against Google in the ad tech market. Google has raised concerns that his history of representing its rivals, including Microsoft and News Corp, makes him biased, and the company has protested his involvement in the ad tech case.

It's unclear how often Mr. Kanter will appear in court. Doha Mekki, the Justice Department's principal deputy assistant attorney general, and Hetal Doshi, the deputy assistant attorney general for antitrust, have helped quarterback the lawsuit and will be in the courtroom daily.

Kenneth Dintzer, a deputy director in the civil division of the Justice Department

Mr. Dintzer, a 30-year veteran of the Justice Department, will give opening statements and is leading the government's case in the courtroom.

A graduate of the University of Michigan law school, Mr. Dintzer, 59, was assigned to the Google case during the Trump administration. He has argued in pretrial hearings before Judge Mehta that Google destroyed instant messages "depriving" the department "of a rich source of candid discussions between Google's executives, including likely trial witnesses."

He has worked on antitrust cases in the past, including the Justice Department's lawsuit to block AT&T's proposed merger with T-Mobile in 2011. The companies eventually dropped the deal.

Philip J. Weiser, Colorado's attorney general

Mr. Weiser is overseeing a coalition of 38 state and other attorneys generals that joined the Justice Department in its search lawsuit.

Mr. Weiser, 55, a former deputy assistant attorney general of antitrust at the Justice Department for the Obama administration, has been a vocal critic of big tech companies for stifling competition.

After graduating from New York University Law School, he became a counsel to Joel Klein, the Justice Department's head of antitrust during the agency's Microsoft monopoly lawsuit in the 1990s. He didn't work directly on the case but said in an interview that it had influenced him.

Mr. Weiser has picked Jonathan Sallet, a former deputy head of antitrust at the Justice Department, and William Cavanaugh, a lawyer at Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler and a former Justice Department official, as the lead litigators for the states.

For the defense

Sundar Pichai, Google's chief executive

Mr. Pichai, the chief executive of Google, is widely expected to testify during the trial.

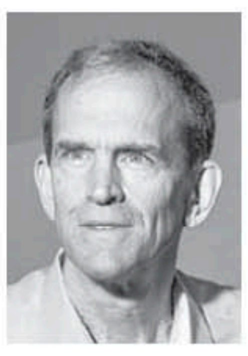
He joined Google in 2004 as a product management leader of Chrome and other tools, and was named chief executive in August 2015.

A measured and calm speaker who has at times been called boring, Mr. Pichai, 51, was largely unruffled when testifying in congressional hearings over content moderation and antitrust in recent years. That may serve him well in the trial.

Google's founders, Mr. Page and Mr. Brin, aren't expected to be called as witnesses. But the Justice Department and Google are likely to call other tech executives to testify, including Eddy Cue, Apple's senior vice president of services, to discuss the company's search deals with Google.

Kent Walker, Google's president of global affairs

Mr. Walker, Google's president of global affairs and chief legal counsel, is overseeing the company's defense.



Mr. Walker, 62, received his law degree from Stanford and joined Google in 2006. He led Google's policy and legal strategy through an antitrust investigation by the Federal Trade Commission that began in 2009. The agency decided not to proceed with a lawsuit after the company agreed to some changes.

Mr. Walker is overseeing a big team of in-house and outside lawyers and will be in and out of the courtroom. Google's daily legal representative in the courtroom, who has supervised strategy on the case, is Lara Kollios, a director in regulatory response and investigations.

John E. Schmidtlein, partner at Williams & Connolly

Mr. Schmidtlein, a co-chair of antitrust at Williams & Connolly, is Google's lead lawyer in the courtroom.

Google has turned to lawyers like Mr. Schmidtlein, 57, who fought against Microsoft in antitrust cases two decades ago, to defend it in court. In 2002, Mr. Schmidtlein represented states that sued Microsoft for using its dominance in Windows software to block rival media players.

Mr. Schmidtlein, who received his law degree from Georgetown University, also has a long track record working for tech companies. This year, he helped Amazon defeat an antitrust lawsuit that consumers brought against its logistics practices.

Google's litigation team also includes Susan Creighton, a partner at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati who represented Netscape in the government's 1998 antitrust suit against Microsoft, and Mark Popofsky, a partner at Ropes & Gray who was a senior counsel to the Justice Department in that suit against Microsoft.

Why the Justice Dept. Is Suing the Search Engine Giant

By DAVID McCABE and NICO GRANT

A federal judge will start hearing claims this week from the Justice Department and a group of states that Google abused its power as a monopoly over online search services.

Google is synonymous with looking for information online and has leveraged its massively successful search tool to build a giant business spanning advertising, cloud computing and the online video powerhouse YouTube.

The outcome of the trial will have even broader implications than Google's business. By putting decades of Silicon Valley practices under the microscope, it will provide an indication of how successful regulators in the United States will be in their efforts to rein in the power of Big Tech.

What's this trial about?

A judge will consider whether, as the Justice Department and a group of states argue, Google abused its power as a monopoly. It's the first monopoly trial against a tech giant since the landmark proceedings against Microsoft more than 20 years ago.

In the decades since, Google has amassed 90 percent of the search engine market in the United States and 91 percent globally, according to Similarweb, a data analysis firm.

Why does it matter?

If Google loses this case, the ruling could chip away at its stature and influence in the technology industry — something that could limit the way Google can compete in the marketplace and reshuffle power in Silicon Valley.

It is also a test for governments that say tech giants like Google, Apple, Amazon, Microsoft and Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, have too much influence over our online lives. The nation's antitrust laws were first written more than a century ago, and this trial will show whether they can be used to rein in the fast-moving tech industry.

What, exactly, is Google accused of doing?

The Justice Department has accused Google, which is based in Mountain View, Calif., of illegally using partnerships with phone makers and internet browser companies to shut out rival search engines.

Thanks to agreements with companies like Apple, Samsung and Mozilla, Google has been the default search engine when billions of web users open a browser on their phones, tablets and personal computers. The government has argued that Google's multibillion-dollar payouts to partners have prevented other search engines like Microsoft Bing and DuckDuckGo from accumulating a meaningful share of the online search market.

The Justice Department also claims Google's practice of preloading its services on devices that use its Android software illegally helped the internet company maintain a monopoly.

What does Google say?

Google says that its business practices are legal and commonplace, and that when it pays to appear on Apple's Safari browser or Mozilla's Firefox, the agreement is akin to a maker of cereals paying supermarkets to stock its boxes at eye level.

The search giant has also repeatedly argued that it has numerous successful competitors in online search. The company points to companies like Amazon and TikTok as thriving competitors. Even though they do not operate general-purpose search engines, Google argues that they are rival destinations where consumers go to find products or content that bypasses Google entirely.

Google has also said that the government is using a flawed argument to target the company because of its popularity. The company believes it is successful because it makes the best search engine. Consumers have a choice to use other search engines, it argues, but choose Google because they find it most helpful.

What does the government need to prove to win its case?

The government has to show that Google has monopoly power over the areas of the economy at issue in the case. The government will try to persuade the judge to take a relatively strict view of what a search engine is and to reject Google's argument that e-commerce sites like Amazon and social media services like TikTok or Instagram are in the same market as Google's search engine. The wider the market, the easier it is for Google to argue that it does not have monopoly power.

The government also needs to prove that Google's commercial agreements meaningfully reduced competition among search engines by denying them a chance to forge similar deals with device makers or gain new customers. The Justice Department will also probably have to explain how these business practices directly or indirectly harmed consumers, which has for decades been an important bar for judges considering antitrust cases.

What will happen if Google is found responsible for violating the law?

The trial will have two parts. First, Judge Amit P. Mehta of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will determine if Google violated the law. If it did, then Judge Mehta will consider possible ways to fix the situation.

The Justice Department has not yet said what actions it would ask the court to impose on Google in the event of its victory.

"But it all starts with the court being convinced that Google has misbehaved," said Bill Baer, a former Justice Department official.

Google's president of global affairs, Kent Walker, highlighted the challenge of finding an appropriate remedy without forcing other companies that are not being sued, including Apple and Samsung, to change their business practices.

It is possible that the Justice Department will ask that Google be forbidden to sign exclusive distribution agreements to give other search engines more prominence on consumer devices.

What's the broader context surrounding the trial?

The Justice Department's case against Google focuses on whether the tech giant engaged in anticompetitive conduct to undermine other search engines, which rival the service that made the company a household name.

In the decades since Microsoft was accused of bundling its products together to prevent other web browsers from gaining traction in the market, the technology industry has drastically changed.

Google has emerged as the largest advertising business on the internet. Along with its success has come intensifying scrutiny from regulators around the world, questioning the company's business practices and the competitive, political and social consequences of its popular products.

The European Union has been the most aggressive at trying to rein in Google's power, and this case is the first in which the United States will square off against the company.

Newsom Urges Democrats to 'Buck Up' and Back Biden in 2024

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

WALLY SKALIJ/LOS ANGELES TIMES, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Gov. Gavin Newsom, Democrat of California, has been building a national network, but he says he does not plan to run for president.

Over the past four months, Gavin Newsom, the Democratic governor of California, has traveled to six Republican-led states. He has goaded Gov. Ron DeSantis, the Republican presidential candidate from Florida, to debate on Fox News. He has assembled a small staff of political advisers and created a political action committee to distribute $10 million to Democratic causes and candidates.

And last week, he raised $40,000 for a long-shot candidate for the United States Senate in Tennessee, one of the red states he has criticized his own party as neglecting.

By all appearances, Mr. Newsom is a man with an eye on the White House, building a national network of supporters and accumulating the kind of good will among donors, party operatives and voters that could prove critical should he decide to move beyond Sacramento. Mr. Newsom said in an interview that he was not running for president, and that the time had come for Democrats to rally around President Biden.

"The train has left the station," Mr. Newsom said. "We're all in. Stop talking. He's not going anywhere. It's time for all of us to get on the train and buck up."

But it may be difficult for Mr. Newsom to quiet speculation about his own future. He has spent months positioning himself as one of his party's leading voices during a time of deep Democratic worry and lingering unease about the political strengths of Mr. Biden, who is 80, and his vice president, Kamala Harris.

A CNN poll released on Thursday found that 73 percent of all respondents were "seriously concerned" that the president's age might affect his mental and physical competence. Some 67 percent of Democrats said the party should nominate someone else.

Mr. Newsom has, by his account, sought to reassure the White House in both public and private that he is no threat to Mr. Biden's re-election campaign. And in turn, Mr. Biden's team has appeared to pull him closer. The governor will be a top Democratic surrogate defending Mr. Biden when Republican candidates debate at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library later this month.

This dance — of raising one's profile without undercutting the president — is the challenge for a class of Democrats-in-waiting, which also includes Gov. J.B. Pritzker of Illinois and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan. But Mr. Newsom, a 55-year-old telegenic, popular-in-his-own-state leader, has made himself the most visible in this group, and he may serve as a reminder of Mr. Biden's biggest shortcoming as he seeks re-election.

"He's got to be careful about it," Joel Benenson, a pollster who advised Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, said of Mr. Newsom's effort to raise his profile. "You don't want to be too cute by half. If you are going to run, do it. If not, go out there and make the connections and talk to Democrats, learn about these states. The worst mistake would be the way to do it and seem sly about doing it."

Mr. Newsom presents his travel to Republican states as an attempt to build up the Democratic Party in places he argues it has neglected. And while defending Mr. Biden, particularly on questions about his age and fitness, he also engages in a debate over cultural issues — transgender rights and gun control, to name two — that Democrats have sometimes avoided.

Mr. Newsom spent nearly an hour with Sean Hannity on Fox News in June to make the case for Mr. Biden and to defend his own record in California. "You have to give Gavin Newsom a lot of credit," Mr. Hannity said in an interview. "He knew it wasn't going to be an easy interview."

Mr. Newsom recently turned up at a Boise, Idaho, bookstore to denounce "the insane book bans happening across the country. " He has picked arguments with Republican governors like Mr. DeSantis of Florida and Greg Abbott of Texas, on abortion, gun control and trans rights.

"He is taking the fight to the Republicans," said Jared DeLoof, the executive director of the Democratic Party in Idaho, where Mr. Newsom appeared in July. "Too often Democrats shy away from things like critical race theory or transgender rights or some of these issues that Republican like to pop off about. The governor showed he was really effective on these issues — we can take them on, and we can win."

Mr. Newsom said his activities were done with the consultation and approval of the White House, an assertion confirmed by White House aides.

"I am sensitive to that," he said, noting that he has made a point of not visiting states that are at the center of the presidential battleground. "I am trying not to play into the presidential frame."

(Mr. Newsom, however, did suggest that his still-unscheduled debate with Mr. DeSantis take place in, among other states, Nevada and Georgia, both of which are likely to be in play in 2024.)

A spokesman for Mr. Biden's re-election campaign, T.J. Ducklo, said in a statement Friday that Mr. Newsom "forcefully and effectively makes the president's case publicly and is an enormous asset to our fund-raising and organizing operations."

There are other potential sources of friction as Mr. Newsom's profile rises. Mr. Newsom and Ms. Harris are both ambitious Democrats from the same state who are of similar ages — she is 58 — and have, over the years, had to navigate around each other as they traveled down the same political roads. Ms. Harris would almost certainly be a rival in a Democratic presidential primary in 2028.

Raising a profile without undercutting that of the president.

Mr. Newsom said he and Ms. Harris speak regularly and rejected the suggestion that his success comes at her expense. "This is a true story — I shouldn't even share it. There were a couple of unknown numbers on my voice mail the other day, and it was Kamala checking in," he said. "I am really proud of her, and I don't say that to be patronizing."

Ms. Harris's aides said she had most recently called the governor to ask how California was faring after it was struck by Hurricane Hilary and an earthquake.

Mr. Newsom, who is barred from seeking a third term as governor, has assembled a skeleton structure of campaign aides, in effect a campaign-in-waiting.

He has raised $3.5 million for Democratic candidates, Mr. Biden among them. He is also distributing money from his political action committee, Campaign for Democracy, further enhancing his standing with Democratic candidates and political operatives around the country. "If he ever ran for national office, he has a record to run on," said Sean Clegg, one of Mr. Newsom's top advisers.

Still, should Mr. Newsom seek to expand his political ambitions, he faces some serious obstacles.

Mr. Newsom won a second term as governor last year with nearly 60 percent of the vote. But he is a Democrat in an overwhelmingly Democratic state and has never had to face a tough Republican opponent.

Mr. Newsom has become the face of a state with a long history of innovation and prosperity, but that state also brings with it some of his party's biggest challenges: homelessness, a housing crisis and what may be the end of the kind of growth that has defined the California dream. California has always been a political and cultural outlier and has, more than ever, become a rallying point of the right on issues like crime.

Jessica Millan Patterson, the leader of the California Republican Party, said Mr. Newsom could prove an appealing national candidate, but that he would not play well with swing voters in many states.

"It's a really difficult sale," she said. "I don't think most of the country is looking at California and saying, 'That's what we should be doing.'"

The last California governor elected president was Ronald Reagan, a Republican; but by the time of that election, in 1980, he had been out of office for five years.

Jerry Brown, a former California governor who ran for the White House and lost three times, said that none of the hurdles Mr. Newsom faced were insurmountable. "The most important thing is the candidate and the times," Mr. Brown said. "If the candidate fits the time, I don't think the geography and the cultural differences matter as much."

Mr. Newsom acknowledged all the hurdles. "It's the surround-sound nature of the anger machine that is 24/7, wall-to-wall anti-California," he said. "People's entire careers are built on tearing this state down."

But Mr. Newsom argued — while insisting he was engaging in a hypothetical discussion, since he is not running for president — that being governor of a state like California would make someone particularly qualified to run the nation.

Not that it matters, by the governor's telling. Mr. Newsom said becoming president was "never on my list" and that he was not one of those Democrats who grew up with a photograph of John F. Kennedy on his wall, as he put it, drawing an unstated comparison to Bill Clinton and Pete Buttigieg, the transportation secretary who ran for president in 2020 and may well run again in 2028.

"Look, in 2028, 99.9999 percent of people will not remember a damn thing about what we did in this election," he said. "They will all fall in love with whomever it is — and there will be 30 of them on the stage. No one is naïve about that."

Michael D. Shear contributed reporting from Washington.

Trailing Trump, DeSantis Seeks Edge by Reviving Pandemic Politics

By NICHOLAS NEHAMAS

GRUNDY CENTER, Iowa — Hank Miller, a 64-year-old Iowa farmer, started paying attention to Gov. Ron DeSantis during the coronavirus pandemic, when the Florida governor was a constant presence on Fox News highlighting the reopening of his state.

While Mr. Miller voted for former President Donald J. Trump in 2016 and 2020, he now plans to support Mr. DeSantis, in part, he said, because he was "disappointed" with Mr. Trump for following the advice of the nation's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, who Mr. DeSantis has said should be prosecuted.

"I liked how DeSantis responded to the pandemic," Mr. Miller said at a coffee shop in Grundy Center, Iowa, where Mr. DeSantis campaigned on Saturday. "He didn't just shut things down."

Mr. DeSantis, far behind Mr. Trump in the polls in Iowa and nationally, is clearly hoping that such feelings are widespread among Republican primary voters. The governor's record on Covid-19 provides perhaps his strongest contrast with the former president, whose administration spearheaded the development of the coronavirus vaccines that are now deeply unpopular with the Republican base.

The virus could be an important wedge issue for Mr. DeSantis, who at times has struggled to provide voters with a clear case for why he would be a better president than Mr. Trump, the Republican front-runner. But there are questions about whether a pandemic that many Americans see as long over will resonate with the electorate in 2024.

Now, a recent resurgence of Covid-19 cases is giving Mr. DeSantis a chance to press the argument. In response to the uptick, a small number of schools, universities and hospitals have told students, patients and employees to wear masks again. Mr. DeSantis and other Republicans have seized on that as evidence that the Covid-19 debate, which they frame as a civil rights battle, is far from over.

Mr. DeSantis emphasized that point during his swing through Iowa on Saturday. "When you have people going back to restrictions and mandates, this shows that this issue has not died," he told reporters outside the coffee shop in Grundy Center. "This shows that if we don't bring accountability with my administration, they are going to keep trying to do this."

Since returning to the campaign trail after Hurricane Idalia, which hit Florida last month, Mr. DeSantis has seemingly made the virus his No. 1 issue. He has appeared repeatedly this past week on Fox News and other conservative media outlets lauding his pandemic policies, and has done interviews with local news media outlets in Iowa and New Hampshire. He even held a news conference in Jacksonville — in his role as governor — to promote the way he handled the virus.

"I can tell you here in Florida, we did not and we will not allow the dystopian visions of paranoid hypochondriacs to control our health policies, let alone our state," Mr. DeSantis said on Thursday at the event in Jacksonville, which, in the absence of formal policy announcements, had the feel of a campaign rally.

JORDAN GALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida is hoping his actions during the pandemic give him a lift among Republican primary voters.

Mr. DeSantis is taking advantage of an apparent shift in the national mood on the virus, even among Democrats. Only 12 percent of Americans say they typically wear a mask in public, according to a poll conducted last month by Yahoo News and YouGov.

After the first lady, Jill Biden, was recently diagnosed with Covid-19, President Biden joked with reporters at the White House about the fact that he was not wearing a mask. Although he had tested negative, Mr. Biden said he was told he needed to continue masking for 10 days.

"Don't tell them I didn't have it on when I walked in," Mr. Biden said, holding up his mask.

As Mr. DeSantis has elevated the issue of Covid-19 once more, the Trump campaign has responded by accusing Mr. DeSantis of hypocrisy, pointing out that he did issue shut down orders and at one point praised Dr. Fauci.

"Lockdown Ron should take a look in the mirror and ask himself why he's trying to gaslight voters," Steven Cheung, a Trump campaign spokesman, said in a statement.

But while many Republican governors shut down their states at the pandemic's start, Mr. DeSantis was early to fully reopen.

Mr. Trump, who was always skeptical of masking and other public health measures, has also begun talking about Covid-19 restrictions on the trail.

"The radical Democrats are trying hard to restart Covid hysteria," Mr. Trump said on Friday at a rally in Rapid City, S.D. He has also downplayed the role Dr. Fauci played in his administration.

Still, as Republican candidates try to resuscitate the pandemic as a political issue, they may face virus weariness.

During Mr. DeSantis's Saturday bus tour through Iowa, several voters said in interviews that the pandemic was not a top concern for them going into 2024, even if they admired the governor's record.

"We don't need to hear about it," said Dave Sweeney, a retired farmer who said he was trying to decide between supporting Mr. DeSantis, Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, former Gov. Nikki Haley of South Carolina and the entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy. "It's not really an issue anymore."

It's possible that audiences in places like New Hampshire, which imposed more stringent public health measures than Iowa, may be more receptive.

In the run-up to his presidential campaign, Mr. DeSantis signed a series of public health laws in Florida that he often points to on the trail, including ones banning mask and vaccine mandates. He also instigated a state grand jury investigation into possible "misconduct" by scientists and vaccine manufacturers. (No charges have been brought.)

While Mr. DeSantis says his Covid-19 policies protected Floridians from government overreach and kept the economy going, the state suffered a disproportionate number of coronavirus deaths during the Delta wave of the virus in 2021, after Mr. DeSantis stopped preaching the virtues of vaccines, a New York Times investigation found.

Still, such criticisms are unlikely to matter in a Republican primary where many voters discount the severity of a virus that has killed more than a million Americans since 2020.

"I think it's a common cold," said Roger Hibdon, 32, an engineer from Grundy Center. "I'm not worried about it."

Michael Gold contributed reporting from Rapid City, S.D., and Ruth Igielnik from Washington.

Conspiracies Gain Traction As Infections Tick Higher

By STUART A. THOMPSON

As Covid-19 cases have climbed as part of a late-summer uptick, right-wing influencers and conspiracy theorists have responded by stoking fears about mass lockdowns and spreading unsubstantiated new ideas about Covid-19's links to world events.

"Do they want Covid measures back to put us on war footing in preparation for the war with Russia?" Jack Posobiec, a right-wing personality, said to more than 150,000 followers on his Telegram channel.

There is little evidence that the current wave of Covid-19 cases will prompt the kinds of extreme countermeasures seen during the worst of the pandemic. The share of Covid-19 cases nationwide peaked at 14.1 percent in August — in line with most surges since the pandemic began — but hospitalizations were at near historic lows.

Officials have instead responded with targeted efforts, noting that the country was benefiting from wider immunity, better treatments for the sick and more accessible tests that can help prevent surges from becoming full-blown crises.

But to conspiracy theorists and right-wing influencers online, each uptick is an opportunity to sow fear and rile up their supporters, according to disinformation experts. The use of "plandemic" and "scamdemic" — two terms describing Covid-19 as a ruse — rose sharply in August on right-wing websites, according to data from Pyrra, a company that monitors threats and misinformation on alternative social networks.

"I would almost call it an obsession for the Covid denier, anti-vax community," said Welton Chang, the co-founder and chief executive of Pyrra. "They just make mountains out of molehills for every little thing."

Misinformation about Covid-19 is as old as the virus itself. Much of it is about vaccines: One-third of Americans said they believed that the Covid-19 vaccines caused thousands of sudden deaths in otherwise healthy people, according to a survey published in August by the KFF, a nonprofit research group. While there is no link between Covid-19 vaccines and sudden deaths, conspiracy theorists have often circulated the idea as celebrities and athletes fall ill from unrelated causes.

In many right-wing spaces online, users still claim without evidence that the virus is a planned bioweapon, that vaccines contain microchips or that unproven medicines offer simple cures for the virus's symptoms.

As Covid-19 becomes recurring like the flu, disinformation experts warned that the false and misleading ideas swirling around the pandemic will continue evolving.

The latest misleading claims sprung after comments by the Biden administration in late August, when it issued warnings of a fall wave of Covid-19 infections. Health officials recommended Americans get vaccinated against new subvariants using forthcoming booster doses.

The reaction was swift.

"RED ALERT!" ran one headline this week on Infowars, the conspiratorial website run by Alex Jones, the right-wing fabulist. "White House Announces Plan to Reimplement Covid Tyranny."

The rise in cases has also activated conservative politicians, who have found that criticizing lockdowns and mask mandates is a politically potent message for Republican voters.

"No mask mandates," Vivek Ramaswamy, a Republican who is seeking the presidential nomination, told The Daily Signal, a right-wing news site. "No vaccine mandates. No lockdown ever again."

Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican from Georgia, said this month that the rising caseloads were being exaggerated by Democrats to "distract people" from the party's political failings.

"We're going to have more Covid to increase mass hysteria and fear," she said on Infowars.

Former President Donald J. Trump, the front-runner for the Republican nomination, has asserted his opposition to vaccines and other countermeasures that he once advocated as president.

He posted a video last week to Truth Social, his social network, claiming that concerns over Covid-19 variants were part of a ruse to reinstate vote-by-mail policies used during the 2020 election.

"The left wing lunatics are trying very hard to bring back the Covid lockdowns and mandates with all of their sudden fear-mongering about the new variants that are coming," he said. "Gee whiz, you know what else is coming? The upcoming election."

CARLOS BERNATE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Gov. Glenn Youngkin, a Republican, has helped to raise millions to support legislative candidates.

Virginia Acts as a 'Test Case' for 2024

From Page A1

abortion remains just as potent a get-out-the-vote issue for the party as it has been in a string of state elections since the reversal of Roe v. Wade.

With Mr. Youngkin overseeing his party's message, the Republican pitch to turn out voters is less conservative red meat than roast chicken — a Republican comfort menu of tax cuts, job creation and parental influence over schools, which the governor labels "common-sense conservative policies."

On abortion, Mr. Youngkin, who is not on the ballot, wants to ban the procedure after 15 weeks with exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother. If Republicans take majorities in both legislative chambers — and both are in play — the takeaway is likely to be that the party cracked the code with suburban swing voters on abortion by offering a more middle-of-the-road position than the near total bans passed in deep-red states.

"This election is going to matter; it's going to set things up for 2024," said Don Scott, the Democratic leader of the Virginia House of Delegates, who is one his party's lead strategists. "If Virginia goes the wrong way, the narrative is going to be the Republicans have figured out the right election combination to overcome their extremism on abortion."

And it could be a road map for Republicans in other states who are looking to defuse the issue after election losses following the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision.

All 40 seats in the Virginia Senate and all 100 in the House are on the ballot. Republicans hold a slim majority in the House, and Democrats narrowly control the Senate. Strategists on both sides agree that each chamber is up for grabs.

"Folks, hold our House and flip our Senate, we know how to do this," Mr. Youngkin urged a crowd on Saturday in a swing House district south of Richmond. He added, "Virginia is the test case."

He did not mention that another upshot of Republicans' taking full control of state government is that Mr. Youngkin would further ascend as a national figure. Although he earlier teased a presidential run for 2024 — encouraged by many wealthy out-of-state donors and conservative news media outlets who still yearn for him to get in the race — he has batted away the calls for months, saying his sole focus is turning the state.

Although he has not ruled out a late entry into the primary, the political calendar and the polls argue strongly against such a move. Filing deadlines for the ballot in the early primary states of South Carolina and Nevada will have passed by November.

In a recent Roanoke College Poll, 51 percent of Virginians approved of Mr. Youngkin's job as governor, but only 9 percent of Republicans in his home state want him to be the 2024 nominee, versus 47 percent who favor Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Youngkin, a wealthy former financial executive, has raised record sums for the Spirit of Virginia, his political committee supporting legislative candidates. The group says it pulled in $3.3 million in August and has raised $12 million since March. It is underwriting a tour of swing districts with Mr. Youngkin urging supporters to sign the side of a bus to show their commitment to voting early starting Sept. 22 — a practice that Mr. Trump had made toxic with the G.O.P. base but has recently embraced.

With Democrats lacking a comparable state leader this year, Virginia's Democratic U.S. senators, Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine, have raised alarms in recent weeks that the party was falling behind in fund-raising and mobilization.

The White House heard the pleas, and President Biden directed the Democratic National Committee to funnel $1.2 million to the Majority Project, the Democratic group in Virginia coordinating door-knockers and other voter outreach in key districts.

During Mr. Trump's presidency, Virginia Democrats won full control of state government in elections in 2017 and 2019. In 2021, Mr. Youngkin and down-ballot Republicans profited from a backlash over pandemic-era school closures as well as rising inflation under Mr. Biden.

"I'd love to have said that Virginia is solidly blue; that's clearly not the case," Mr. Warner said in an interview. Control of each chamber is likely to come down to a handful of races: four seats in the Senate and seven in the House that are considered tossups, according to an analysis by the nonpartisan Virginia Public Access Project.

Many of the seats are in the exurbs of Virginia's metropolitan areas — Greater Washington, Richmond and Hampton Roads — a frontier of swing voters, many college-educated, the kind of voters who have had starring roles in elections across the U.S. in recent years.

Democratic strategists said they needed to win only one of the four tossup Senate seats to hold their current majority. They are encouraged that Democratic congressional candidates carried all of the districts in the 2022 midterms. Republicans counter that Mr. Youngkin won the same districts in his 2021 election, and that he remained popular.

One of the most closely watched races is between two first-time Senate candidates in Loudoun County, a Washington exurb that became a national flashpoint in 2021 after conservative attacks on its public school policies on diversity and transgender students.

Mr. Youngkin seized on those cultural issues to brand himself the "parents' rights" candidate, which helped power his victory. In office, he banned critical race theory in K-12 schools (although educators said C.R.T. had no influence on curriculums), set up a tip line for parents to report about teachers and gave parents control of the names and pronouns their children used in school.

Whether these issues still motivate voters is one of the unknowns in this year's election. Mr. Youngkin is betting that they do and is holding a "Parents Matter" town-hall-style event in Loudon County on Tuesday. Over the weekend, the governor went on "Fox News Sunday" to announce he had pardoned a father arrested in a 2021 episode at a Loudoun County School Board meeting where the father had criticized officials after his daughter was sexually assaulted in school.

Russet Perry, the Democrat running for the open Senate seat in the county, said that when she knocked on the doors of swing voters, the top education issue she heard was concerns over school shootings, not culture-war matters.

"Parents are a little tired of the politics intentionally injected into the schools by people who do not live here, including Glenn Youngkin," said Ms. Perry, a former prosecutor with a daughter who is a high school freshman in public school.

Across the state, the Democratic message is that Republicans are "extremists" and if they win full control in Richmond, they will seek strict abortion limits.

But Mr. Youngkin has mostly focused his message elsewhere. In his 18-minute speech to rally Republicans on Saturday in Prince George, Va., he did not utter the words "abortion" or "pro-life," instead stressing "common sense" policies.

After a half-hour of greeting supporters, as aides hustled him to his car, he responded to a reporter's shouted question about whether he would sign a six-week abortion ban.

"Virginians elected a pro-life governor," he said. "At the end of the day, I think we can ask all kinds of hypothetical questions. What I've been very clear on — and I'd appreciate you writing it clearly — is that I support a bill to protect life at 15 weeks."

Youngkin Pardons Man Arrested at Meeting

By STEPHANIE SAUL

In a case that became a national flashpoint over transgender rights in schools, Gov. Glenn Youngkin of Virginia has pardoned a father who was arrested during a contentious school board meeting in Loudoun County.

Mr. Youngkin's office released a statement Sunday announcing the pardon of Scott Smith, who was charged after he rose to announce during a 2021 school board meeting that his daughter had been assaulted in a high school restroom by a boy "wearing a skirt." The Loudoun County School Board was debating the subject of restroom use by transgender students at the meeting.

Mr. Smith was arrested after he clenched his fist and leaned toward a woman during an argument. Deputies dragged him to the ground as he continued struggling and arguing with them, an encounter seen in video that flew across the internet.

Mr. Smith was convicted of two misdemeanors in connection with the episode, but one of the charges — obstruction of justice — was later thrown out, and Mr. Smith was scheduled for trial on Sept. 25 in an appeal of the remaining charge — disorderly conduct.

The pardon comes at a time when the governor, a Republican who was elected in 2021 partly by seizing upon parental rights as an issue, is pushing to win Republican control in the State Senate in the November election. The 40-delegate body's current Democratic majority has blocked some Republican initiatives, including a proposal to track diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the state's public universities.

"In Virginia, parents matter, and my resolve to empower parents is unwavering," Mr. Youngkin said in a statement announcing the pardon of Mr. Smith, whom Mr. Youngkin characterized as having been "wrongfully prosecuted."

Buta Biberaj, the commonwealth attorney for Loudoun County, whose office initially handled Mr. Smith's prosecution, accused Mr. Youngkin of political motivations, pointing out that early voting in the November election begins in two weeks. In a statement, she called the governor's decision an "unprecedented and inappropriate intervention into an active legal case."

"This is something where, unfortunately, I think the governor was using this for political gaming," Ms. Biberaj said in an interview on Monday.

She noted that Mr. Youngkin had been aware of the case since before taking office: "Now, two weeks before early voting, you're going to announce this?"

Ms. Biberaj, a Democrat, is running for re-election in November.

A lawyer for Mr. Smith, Bill Stanley, who is also a Republican state senator in Virginia, defended the governor's decision in a posting on social media, and said that Ms. Biberaj was the one pulling a political stunt. Mr. Stanley could not be reached for comment.

The Smith case led to the dismissal of the Loudoun County superintendent of schools, Scott Ziegler, who faces trial on misdemeanor charges of making false public statements concerning the episode in the bathroom. He has pleaded not guilty.

Testimony in the case showed that Mr. Smith's daughter had a prior consensual relationship with the boy Mr. Smith accused of assault, that the boy was not transgender, and that the boy was transferred to another school where he was accused in yet another case.

Clockwise from top left: Leif Haugen at Thoma Lookout in northwest Montana with his dog, Ollie. His supplies include well-worn books, an instrument for measuring angles called an alidade and binoculars.

A Sharp (Human) Lens Still Plays a Crucial Role In Spotting Wildfires

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shrinking its number of lookouts. Already, though, their ranks are down considerably from before World War II, when thousands of rangers were stationed across hilltops in the young agency's all-out war on fire.

Today the service staffs just 71 lookouts in Washington and Oregon; 59 in California; and 52 in Montana, northern Idaho and northwest Wyoming, Mr. Owen said. Nationwide, including lookouts run by other federal, state and local agencies, perhaps 300 are in service, according to Gary Weber, treasurer of the Forest Fire Lookout Association, a preservation group. Of the others still standing, many are now vacation rentals.

And yet, as officials in northwest Montana will tell you, there are reasons the lookout isn't ready to disappear into the history books. Not completely. Not yet.

Photographs by MARK FELIX

For Mr. Haugen's job is not merely to locate fires, though he says he can do this in a wider range of conditions than helicopters (which can't hover safely in thunderstorms), more precisely in some cases than planes (which can't easily maneuver in narrow valleys) and more accurately at times than satellites (which can mistake sun-warmed rocks for fires).

He also relays messages between dispatchers and firefighters in canyons where the mountains block radio and cell signals. He tracks local weather shifts that affect the way fires behave and move. And he serves as safety watch for crews on the ground, alerting them to blazes that could churn their way and planning escape routes. Fifty percent of his job, he said, takes place once a fire response is underway.

"A human on top of a mountain can provide so much more than a piece of technology," said Jeremy Harker, the fire management officer for Glacier National Park, a stretch of which Mr. Haugen surveys from his perch in the neighboring Flathead National Forest.

August's deadly blaze on Maui notwithstanding, this fire season so far has been the nation's most subdued in a decade. Wet weather has dampened risks across much of California, though not in its northernmost forests, where large fires have raged in recent weeks. Alaska had its calmest season on record until lightning ignited a slew of blazes in late July. Fires have destroyed homes in Washington and Oregon.

Wildfires unfold across vast, difficult terrain, in fast-changing conditions and with a frightening amount of random chance. In places like Glacier, officials don't just put them all out. They must decide, sometimes hour by hour, whether letting a fire burn might provide ecological benefits or whether it is threatening enough lives and property to justify putting firefighters at risk.

New technology aids in these decisions, said Andy Huntsberger, a district fire management officer in the Flathead. But "it doesn't replace the human element," he said. Since 1998, the number of staffed lookouts in Glacier and the Flathead has grown to 12 from five.

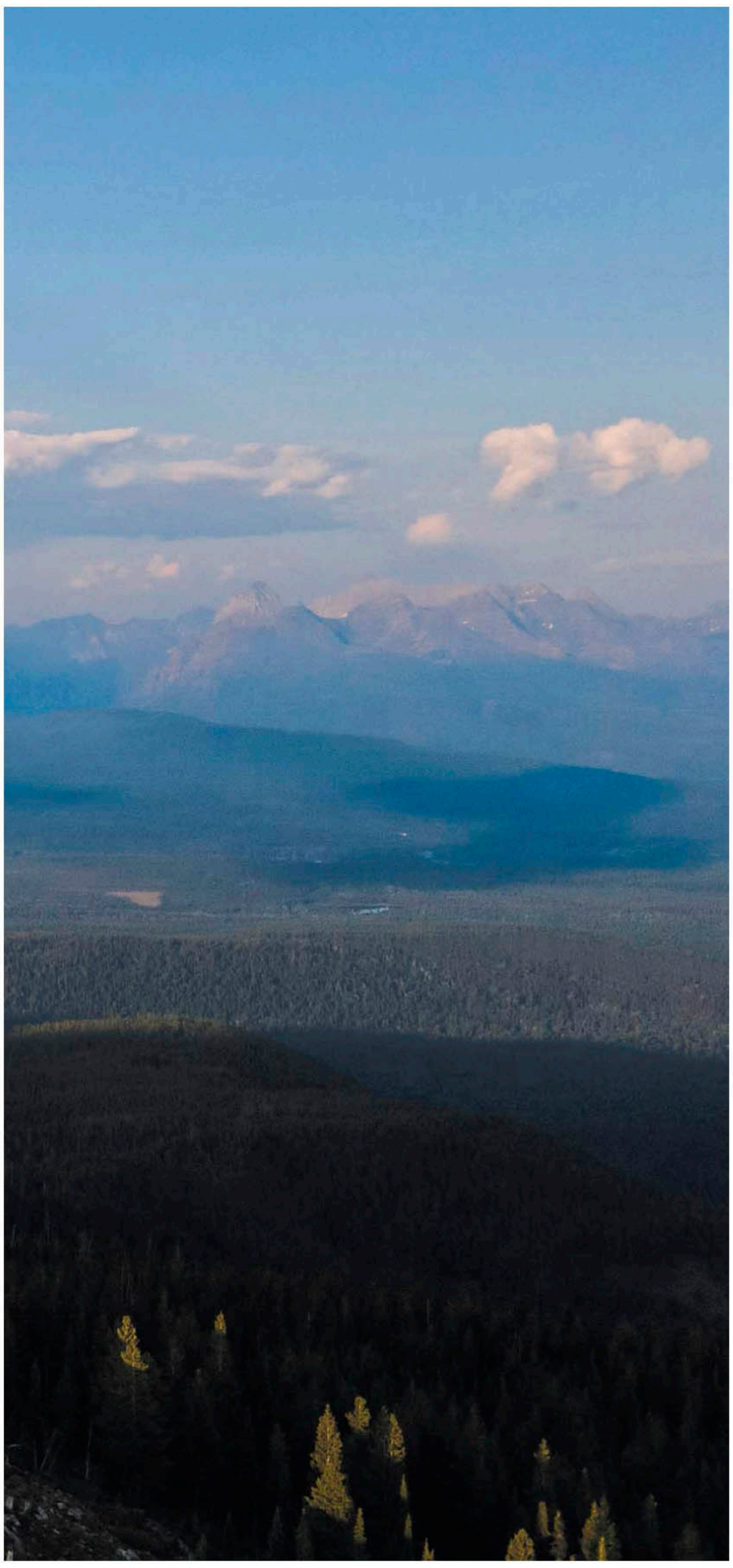
Nobody doubts that cameras are getting better at the basic mechanical task of spotting smoke. California has a network of more than 1,000 fire-monitoring cameras and sensor arrays, and it is augmenting them with artificial intelligence.

The Douglas Forest Protective Association, which handles firefighting on 1.6 million acres of private and government land in southwest Oregon, has replaced its eight staffed lookouts with a camera system developed by FireWeb, a company in South Africa. The agency now employs six people to monitor the feeds from 36 cameras between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. daily during fire season.

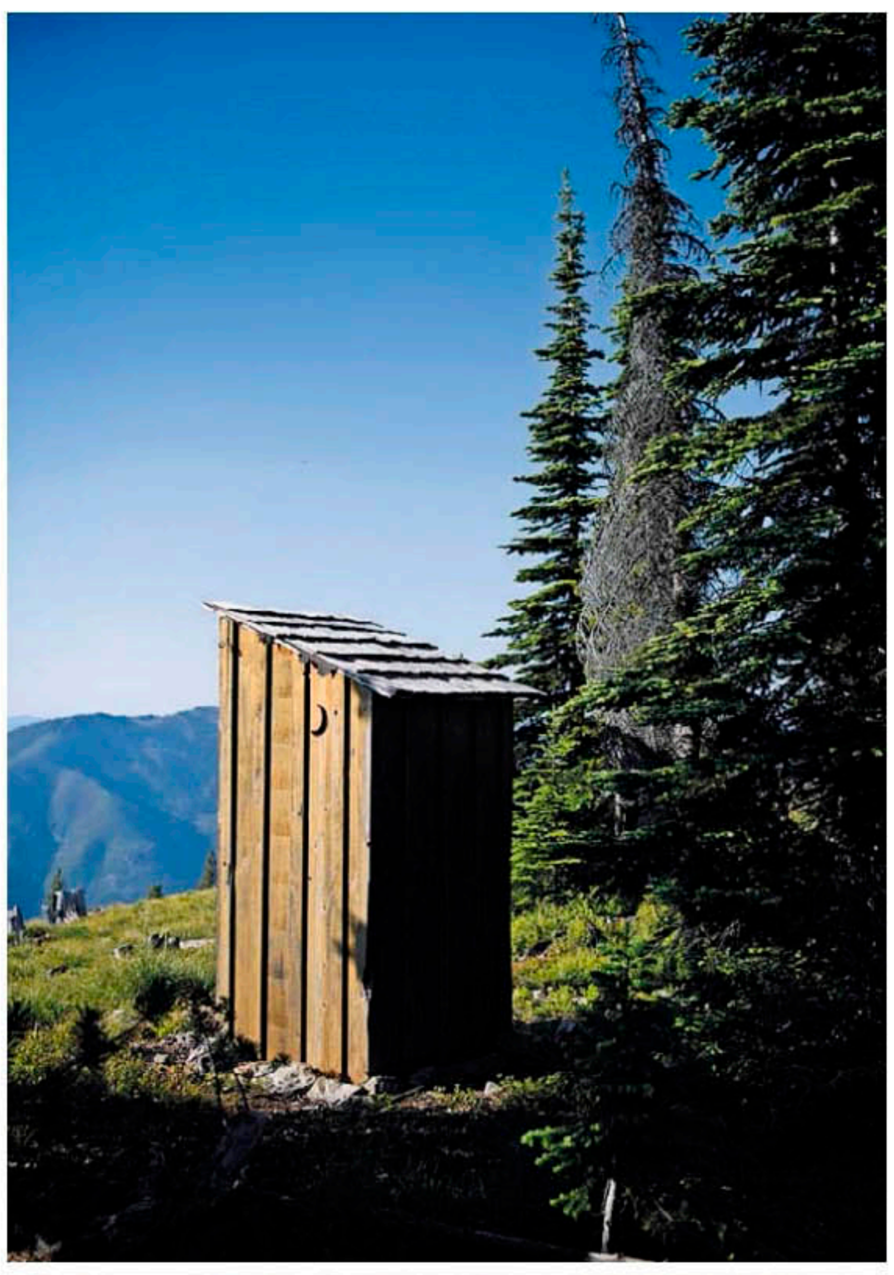
Scientists are getting better at monitoring wildfires from space, too, though satellites still have big limitations.

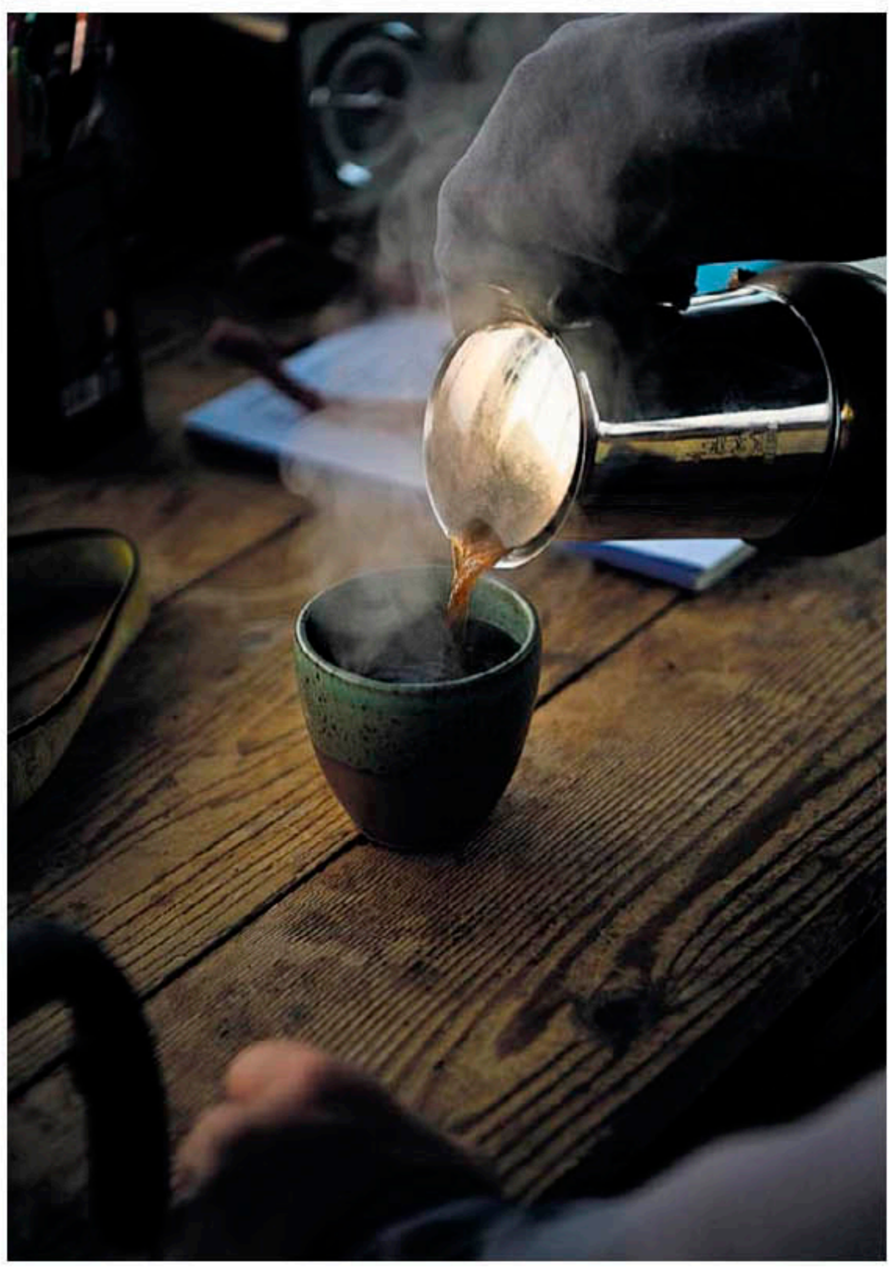
The main fire-observing orbiters used by NASA and the Forest Service get a look at the same location in the contiguous United States only a few times a day, and not always at a great angle. So even after a blaze is large enough to be detected, it might be three to 12 hours before a satellite sees it and the data is processed, said Louis Giglio, a professor of geographical sciences at the University of Maryland who works with NASA on satellite fire monitoring.

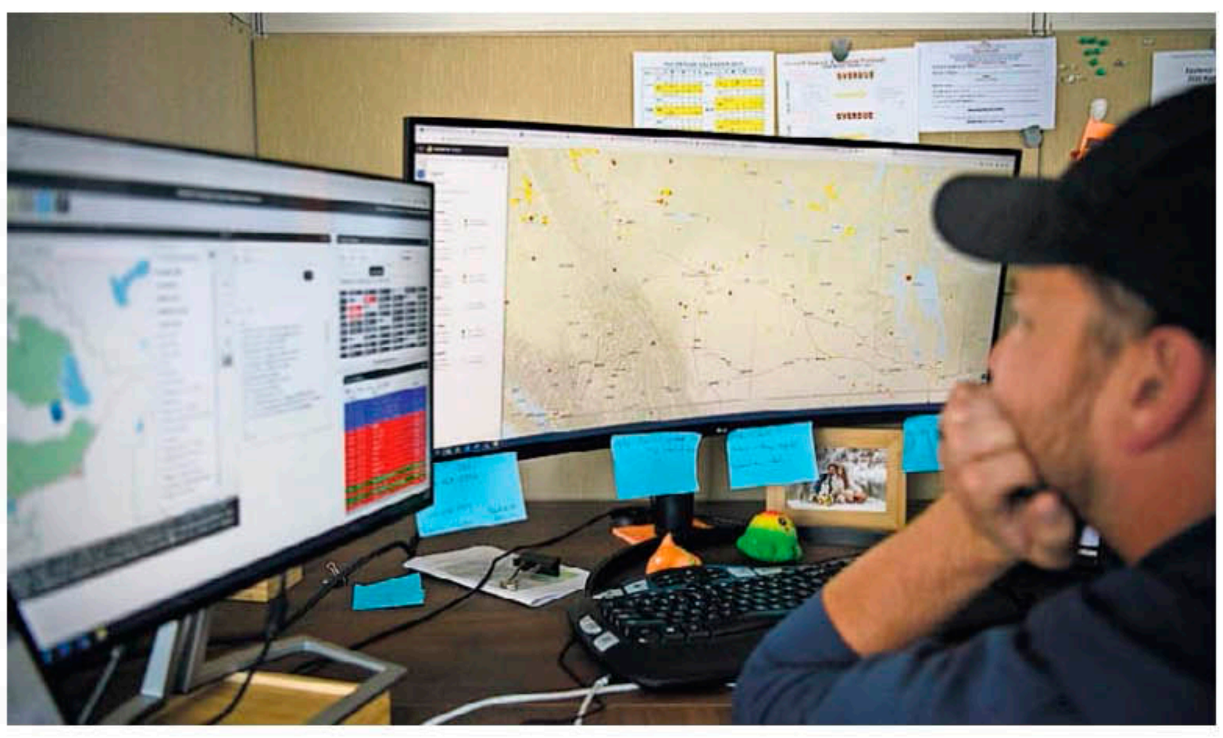
Weather satellites that sit above the same region of Earth can locate hot spots more speedily, but they can't always distinguish a small blaze from, say, a hot rock. And they work better on open, brush-filled lands like Southern California's than in dense forests like those in northwest Montana, where tree canopies can obscure a smoldering fire for days, said Ryan Leach, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Missoula, Mont.



The off-the-grid cabin at Thoma Lookout, left, elevation 7,104 feet, has no running water. Clockwise from below left: Mr. Haugen has to collect his water and use an outhouse. Coffee is a staple for Mr. Haugen. And a fire danger sign outside of the Glacier View/Hungry Horse Ranger Station in Flathead is a common sight.







Chris Otto, an assistant dispatch manager, assesses heat signatures at the Kalispell Interagency Dispatch Center in Glacier National Park.

Human lookouts, however, can see the smoke much sooner. "They can detect the fires quicker than the satellites and catch them when they're smaller, less dangerous and easier to put out," Mr. Leach said.

Canada, which has had a record-shattering wildfire season, is preparing to launch dedicated fire-monitoring satellites in 2029. Start-ups in Israel and Germany are building satellite-based early warning systems.

Yet spotting fires sooner might not be the biggest benefit of such projects, Dr. Giglio said. Instead, data from new orbiters could improve scientists' models of how fires spread. This could help officials plan evacuations better, and help land managers conduct more thinning and intentional burning of dense forests. "I just feel like we're neglecting the less-flashy stuff," Dr. Giglio said.

Mr. Haugen's setup at Thoma Lookout is about as unflashy as it gets. The glaring exception (And how could it be otherwise?) is the view, a spellbinding panorama of the Crown of the Continent region.

His cabin, elevation 7,104 feet, or just under 2,200 meters, is off the grid and has no running water. There are windows on all sides, an alidade for measuring angles and well-thumbed copies of "Moby-Dick" and Cormac McCarthy's "Border Trilogy."

"It takes a certain kind of person" to be a lookout, he said on a recent evening, sitting outside his cabin as the clouds dropped ghostly trails of virga over the valley. "A lot of people think, 'Oh, I could do that.' And they do it for a year and flame out."

When did he realize he was the right kind of person? "My first season."

Mr. Haugen grew up in suburban Minneapolis, and for someone who spends a lot of time on his own in the woods, he still has plenty of what he calls "Minnesota nice." He generously shared his time, stories and coffee with a reporter and a photographer while also acknowledging, rather cheerfully, that he hoped no more visitors would show up once they left. ("No offense.")

He spoke of the pride he took in supporting fire managers, firefighters and his fellow lookouts, whom he helps train in mapping, radio and safety skills. But he also relishes his job's more selfish aspects: the solitude, the long walks on empty trails.

"You have an intimacy with the landscape that you acquire," said Inez Love, 72, a retired teacher who volunteers as a lookout in the Flathead. Each summer, "I leave feeling like I'm leaving something dear."

Mr. Haugen has worked as a lookout since 1994, but he is still a temporary, seasonal employee, with no benefits. He gets overtime, but not as much as firefighters. During the off-seasons, he works as a carpenter and homebuilder, earning four times as much per hour as he does as a lookout, and he puts those skills to use restoring old fire lookout posts.

It has been two years since he built a house, though. City dwellers and remote workers flocked to Montana in the early days of the pandemic seeking big skies and open spaces, driving up home prices. Mr. Haugen was already feeling overworked, and the Covid boom gave him a good reason to quit.

Rising living costs are making it harder for the Forest Service to hire in the Flathead area, Mr. Huntsberger, the fire management officer, said. Five years ago, an opening for a firefighter or fire management job might receive 10 to 20 applicants, he said. Of late it's more like two or three. Even one.

The combination is inauspicious, and it is appearing in other parts of the West as well: more houses in fire-prone places, not enough fire experts.

"The fire was here before us, and the fire will be here after us," Mr. Huntsberger said. What's new is all the development we have placed in fire's way, and the need to protect it. "We want to do that," he said. "But, you know, it creates challenges."

A truck at the firefighting headquarters for the Flathead Hot Shot Crew, above, in Glacier National Park, part of the area Mr. Haugen surveys. The amazing views from Thoma often include wildlife like mountain goats.

Given F.D.A. Approval, Latest Covid Vaccines Expected in Coming Days

By CHRISTINA JEWETT and NOAH WEILAND

MARK J. TERRILL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A vaccine drive last fall. This year's campaign will be the first since the end of the public health emergency, which expired in May.

The Food and Drug Administration approved a new round of Covid boosters on Monday that will arrive alongside the seasonal flu vaccine and shots to protect infants and older adults from R.S.V., a potentially lethal respiratory virus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is expected to follow up on Tuesday with an advisory meeting to discuss who should get the new shots, by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna. After a final decision by the C.D.C.'s director, millions of doses will be shipped to pharmacies, clinics and health systems nationwide within days.

As Covid cases creep up, the trifecta of prevention measures could portend the first winter of the decade without a crush of patients overwhelming some hospitals. But a healthy winter is far from a lock: In the last year, the updated Covid vaccine made it into the arms of only 20 percent of adults in the United States.

Some experts view that statistic with little alarm because the number of Covid deaths slowed considerably over the last year, thanks to an increasingly immune population and higher vaccine rates among older Americans. Others see this year as an opportunity to protect more vulnerable people from severe illness or death.

"Vaccination remains critical to public health and continued protection against serious consequences of Covid-19, including hospitalization and death," said Dr. Peter Marks, the F.D.A's top vaccine expert.

The F.D.A. granted full approval for the new formulas for people who are 12 and older and authorized them to protect infants six months and older through age 11. The Pfizer shot was authorized in the European Union for ages 6 months and older on Aug. 31.

Covid vaccines are just rolling out in Britain this week, with the first doses going to the highest risk people in care homes, ages 65 and over as well as health and social care staff members.

Federal officials have been retreating from labeling the new formulation as boosters to previous shots, preferring to recast them as an annual immunization effort akin to the flu vaccine. That shift may reflect concern over the fatigue that some Americans have expressed about yet another round of shots against the virus.

The vaccine campaign will also be the first since the end of the public health emergency, which expired in May. In previous years, the U.S. government bought hundreds of millions of vaccine doses and distributed them free. This year, private insurance and government payers like Medicare that cover the vast majority of Americans are expected to provide free vaccines to people.

But the question remains whether the private market of hospitals, clinics and pharmacies will be able to calibrate their vaccine orders to stock a realistic supply. Experts are uncertain how much demand there will be for the latest shots.

"There could be a period in here where things are a little bit chaotic, and that's never a good situation," said Dr. Marcus Plescia, chief medical officer of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, a public health group.

Also of concern in the handoff to the private market: the nation's 23 million adults with no health insurance. The Biden administration has made plans to cover costs and offer the Covid vaccine through local clinics and major pharmacies, but some experts are worried about whether people who lack insurance will be aware of the new shots — or where to get them.

"They don't have an insurer sending them leaflets — they may not have a usual source of care," said Anthony Wright, executive director of Health Access, a California advocacy group. "And so the trusted messenger of their health plan, their doctor, their clinic, is not there saying, 'It's no cost. It's really easy.'"

Vaccine manufacturers are expected to donate doses for the uninsured. Kelly Cunningham, a spokeswoman for Moderna, said the company had no cap on the number.

The latest shots are becoming available as Covid hospitalizations and deaths are rising slightly, albeit not to the levels of past years. In the week ending Aug. 26, there were 17,400 people admitted to the hospital — more than about 6,000 at a low point this summer. Deaths were also up to about 600 a week last month, though far lower than the weekly average of 14,000 deaths of 2021.

Once the C.D.C. signs off, the Biden administration plans to urge the public to get Covid and flu shots at the same time, a practice that has been studied and considered by some experts to be safe. It's a messaging effort they expect to share with major vaccine makers, which will be marketing the Covid doses commercially for the first time.

Walgreens and CVS said they both already have the updated flu and R.S.V. shots available in stores. Dr. Kevin Ban, Walgreens' chief medical officer, said the chain would have the new Covid shots on hand "as soon as possible." A CVS spokesperson said doses could be arriving later this week. Representatives of both chains said the Covid shot would be available at no cost to all who are eligible under the C.D.C. guidelines expected Tuesday.

Targeted populations most certainly will include people 65 and older as well as those who are immunocompromised or have serious underlying medical conditions that leave them more susceptible to severe illness from the virus.

Nursing homes, which inoculated nearly all of their residents in the first waves of the pandemic, have fallen behind on booster rates: Recent Medicare data show that about 62 percent of residents are up-to-date on their shots even though older adults are among the most vulnerable to severe disease and death from the virus.

The new Covid vaccines target the XBB.1.5 variant, which was dominant when vaccine makers began to formulate and test a new version. They are monovalent because, unlike the earlier boosters, they do not include protection against the original virus that caused widespread infections in China more than three years ago. Though the virus has had a rotating cast of variants, experts say the new Covid jab should fortify protections against severe infection.

Recent fears that one newer, highly mutated variant would escape the vaccine proved unfounded by reputable independent labs, said Fikadu Tafesse, an associate professor of molecular microbiology and immunology at Oregon Health & Science University. The C.D.C. also reviewed studies on the matter and confirmed Friday that the vaccine was holding strong.

"We were really getting ready for no response at all, but the data is very, very promising," Dr. Tafesse said.

As with earlier shots, the updated ones are not expected to eliminate the chances of contracting a mild case of Covid. Instead, they are expected to reduce the chances of severe illness, hospitalization or death.

As the first vaccine's potency waned with newer Omicron variants, a bivalent booster was approved in August 2022 that targeted the initial virus and BA.5, which was dominant at the time. That shot led to fewer people with Covid being hospitalized, dropping over several months to 25 percent from 60 percent.

Pfizer and Moderna reported that their vaccines had a potent response to the newest circulating variants, though only Moderna posted its initial data on Thursday.

But researchers continue to discuss how well it will stand up to new variants. The F.D.A. has mainly reviewed results submitted by the companies of animal or smaller human studies of immune response.

Jerica Pitts, a spokeswoman for Pfizer, said the data submitted by the company to the F.D.A. in June involved tests in animals. Trials following people who re-

An effort to protect against an uptick of coronavirus infections in the fall and winter.

ceived the shot are continuing, she said.

Moderna submitted data to the F.D.A. on the immune response of 100 people to the new shots, which the company said in June "robustly elicit neutralizing antibodies" against XBB variants.

Federal officials would also need to consider whether to recommend the shot to healthy young Americans, said Dr. Walid Gellad, a drug safety expert at the University of Pittsburgh.

Young males have experienced higher rates of myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart muscle, after getting vaccinated, although many recovered after a few months.

"The benefits are just getting lower and lower for young healthy people who've had Covid before," he said. "You have to think about how any risk can change that balance."

Regulators are also considering whether to authorize a booster dose from Novavax, which employs a different but widely used technology for its coronavirus vaccine.

Dr. Daniel Griffin, an infectious disease physician at Columbia University in New York, said getting the Covid shot would help stop the virus's spread to the most vulnerable, including older adults, pregnant people and those with compromised immune systems.

And while many might be weary of the social-protection argument, he said they could lessen their own odds of a more serious outcome.

"So a younger individual may say, 'I'm not going to get a booster for the public health,'" Dr. Griffin said, "'but I am going to get a booster because if I can reduce my chance of getting Covid, I can reduce my chance of long Covid.'"

Carl Zimmer and Apoorva Mandavilli contributed reporting.

Escapee Had Been Fugitive In Brazil Before Jailbreak From Pennsylvania Prison

By ANA IONOVA

KRISTON JAE BETHEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ATF agents searching for the convicted murderer Danelo Cavalcante in Glenmoore, Pa., Sunday.

FIGUEIRÓPOLIS, Brazil — It was just after midnight on a Saturday. A light rain was starting to fall in the mostly empty town square by the church.

Evaldo Alves Feitosa was flipping his last burger of the night when he heard the gunshots outside his snack stand.

"I thought it was a firecracker from a party at the club over there," Mr. Feitosa said. When he looked out, he saw Danelo Cavalcante jumping into a silver car and speeding away.

Left behind was Valter Júnior Moreira dos Reis, lying in a pool of blood after being shot six times.

"It was the last time I saw Danilo," Mr. Feitosa said, using the more common Portuguese pronunciation of his first name. "He disappeared."

Mr. Cavalcante is now the subject of an escalating manhunt in the Pennsylvania countryside, where hundreds of police officers have been scouring the wooded terrain and farmland for almost two weeks, since he clambered out of the Chester County Prison on Aug. 31.

He was being held there for the murder of his former girlfriend, Déborah Evangelista Brandão, in April 2021. After killing her, Mr. Cavalcante had tried to flee, making it as far as Virginia before he was caught and sent to jail.

He was convicted and sentenced this August, and just days before beginning a life sentence in a Pennsylvania state prison, he made his next escape attempt.

After more than a week of hiding out in the quiet communities south of the jail, he slipped through a perimeter set by law enforcement and stole a delivery van over the weekend. On Saturday night Mr. Cavalcante was seen on a doorbell camera miles away. Police are now searching an area deeper in the Pennsylvania countryside, where he abandoned the van, apparently after it ran out of gas.

On Monday, officials told reporters that Mr. Cavalcante's recent movements had changed the nature of the search. They urged people in the area to be vigilant and warned of consequences for anyone who helped him. They said that Mr. Cavalcante's sister, who lived nearby, "chose not to assist" the authorities in the manhunt, and as she had overstayed her visa, is in the process of being deported.

But the thrust of the officials' remarks was unmistakable: this search would likely take a while. "Now we're planning for the long game," said Robert Clark, a supervisory deputy United States marshal.

Neither of his attempted escapes in the U.S. was the first time he had been on the run and proven maddeningly difficult to apprehend.

He vanished from the remote stretch of northern Brazil, too, after Mr. Moreira was shot and killed in 2017, allegedly over an unsettled debt. State prosecutors said an arrest warrant against him was issued on Nov. 21, 2017.

The first time Mr. Cavalcante escaped justice, he found refuge in the rural outskirts of Figueirópolis, a town of about 5,000 people tucked deep in the Brazilian state of Tocantins. After fleeing the crime scene, he hid out on a ranch less than an hour outside town, according to local residents.

"Once you get out," said Kelton Meneses, a priest in Figueirópolis, "it's just ranches and bush beyond here. It's not hard to disappear."

The dusty, wild Brazilian savanna provided the perfect cover for Mr. Cavalcante. Here, cattle ranches stretch for miles, flanked by shrubs and parched forest. Barbed wire fences, some topped with cow skulls, mark the end of one lot and the beginning of the next. Dirt roads weave through jagged boulders, forming treacherous labyrinths that ward off outsiders.

Mr. Cavalcante was at ease in the Brazilian outback, said Raimundo Campos dos Santos, a longtime resident of the area. "When you're used to the ranch, you know how to hide. He spent a lot of time in the bush."

Mr. Cavalcante had moved to this region just over a year before the murder, arriving with his mother and brother from the neighboring state of Maranhão, according to four residents.

Aroaldo Cavalcante, the fugitive's brother, still lives on the family's ranch, according to neighbors. On Sunday afternoon he did not emerge from the farmhouse, and did not respond to text messages requesting an interview.

"Nobody really knew these people well," said Darci Gomes Neve, 75, a neighbor who has lived in the area for two decades. "Danilo didn't stay long. He took off; nobody heard from him again."

But when he arrived in the area, he struck up a fast, unlikely friendship with Mr. Moreira, a popular figure in town.

"He was sweet," said Mr. Feitosa of Mr. Moreira. "He talked to everyone. He liked to dance and to joke around." Mr. Cavalcante was quieter. "He kept to himself, didn't talk much," Mr. Feitosa said. "He didn't look you in the eye."

He disappeared into the wilderness after a shooting in 2017.

Even before Mr. Moreira's death, Mr. Cavalcante was feared by some around town.

"He had this reputation that he kept a lot of guns at home," said Carlos Humberto Jacob, a friend of Mr. Moreira's who knew Mr. Cavalcante.

The friendship between the two men apparently soured when Mr. Cavalcante lent a car to Mr. Moreira, who allegedly damaged the vehicle and never paid for repairs, according to police.

Mr. Cavalcante then began to send death threats to Mr. Moreira, said Mr. Moreira's sister Dayane. "He kept saying, 'I'm going to kill you, I'm going to kill you.'"

In November 2017, Mr. Cavalcante went to the square to confront Mr. Moreira, who had moved to a different city but had returned home to pick up a new driver's license.

After the fatal encounter, Mr. Cavalcante allegedly hid out in the region for several weeks before leaving Brazil under a false identity. He has been considered a fugitive in Brazil since 2017, according to authorities in Tocantins.

As the manhunt in Pennsylvania intensifies, residents of the Brazilian town from which he vanished six years ago are also reeling, said Maria Cardoso, a retired schoolteacher who taught Mr. Moreira and is close to his family.

"It's like a wound that was healing," Ms. Cardoso said.

Campbell Robertson contributed reporting.

Corrections

BUSINESS

An article on Wednesday about Iranian American families' views on education and financial success misstated the grandparent from whom the writer Jason Rezaian received financial support. It was his grandmother, not his grandfather.

Errors are corrected during the press run whenever possible, so some errors noted here may not have appeared in all editions.

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22 Years On, Mourners at Ground Zero Honor Victims of 9/11 Terror Attacks

By CLAIRE FAHY

Mourners gathered in grief in Lower Manhattan on Monday, hugging one another and fighting back tears as they commemorated their lost loved ones on the 22nd anniversary of Sept. 11.

Attendees of the ceremony honoring the victims of the worst terrorist attack on American soil sat in folding chairs and leaned against trees. Flute music filled the air while relatives of those who died read their names aloud, in a ritual that has been repeated for more than two decades.

Some wore T-shirts emblazoned with photos of their family members; others carried posters or framed pictures. Many brought flowers and flags.

The families were joined at ground zero by a number of notable politicians, including Vice President Kamala Harris; Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York; Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York; Eric Adams, New York City's mayor; and Bill de Blasio and Michael Bloomberg, Mr. Adams's most immediate predecessors. Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, who is running for the Republican presidential nomination, also made a brief appearance.

Mr. Adams, who was a police lieutenant at the time of the attacks, told CBS News he had gone to ground zero that day and had been struck by the "eerie stillness."

"The greatest thing about New York City in America was not what happened on 9/11, but what happened on 9/12," he said. "We got up, teachers taught, builders built and we continued to show that we were not going to bend or break."

For Seaver and Sloane Lipshie, whose uncle John J. Tippington II was a firefighter killed in the attacks, Sept. 11 is a day spent either at his firehouse or at ground zero.

MAANSI SRIVASTAVA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Comforting a mourner at ground zero on Monday. Events were held across New York City on the anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Seaver Lipshie, now 26, was only 4 years old the day her uncle died, and her older sister Sloane, was just 6.

They were at the ceremony supporting their mother, Maureen Tippington Lipshie, one of the people reading names, including her brother's. She was a nurse who set up a first aid station at the Trade Center site.

The anniversary is "re-traumatizing" for the family each year, Sloane Lipshie said.

"The rest of the year, of course, you think about it occasionally," she said. "But it's hard to watch my mom suffer. It never changed for her."

Twenty-two years later, the number of emergency workers with the Fire Department who died from illnesses related to the attacks almost exceeds the number of firefighters who died in the line of duty that day.

According to the Uniformed Firefighters Association, 341 firefighters, paramedics and other Fire Department employees have died from cancers and other illnesses linked to the toxic dust at ground zero. The number of firefighters who died on Sept. 11 was 343.

Betty Espinoza attended the ceremony with her sister and two friends. They sat by the South Pool and listened to the names being read from a loudspeaker hung on a nearby tree. Ms. Espinoza's husband, Otto Espinoza, was a police officer who died of cancer in 2015 after working on search and rescue teams at ground zero.

The first few years attending the ceremony were very sad, Ms. Espinoza said, but in recent years she has tried to come to terms with what happened to her husband.

"I always remember him, I always think about him," Ms. Espinoza said. "But this is the life I have to live now."

This year's anniversary came just three days after Mr. Adams and the city's chief medical examiner announced that two additional victims had been identified, the 1,648th and 1,649th. They join a list of 60 others identified in recent years from remains recovered using advanced DNA testing.

"More than 20 years after the disaster, these two new identifications continue to fulfill a solemn pledge," said Dr. Jason Graham, the medical examiner. "Faced with the largest and most complex forensic investigation in the history of our country, we stand undaunted in our mission to use the latest advances in science to serve this promise."

The names of the victims, one man and one woman, were withheld because of their families' wishes. More than 1,100 people — around 40 percent of the dead — remain unidentified, the mayor's office said.

There were events across New York City Monday to honor the anniversary, including vigils and speeches. At the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, more than 1,500 volunteers packaged jambalaya to be sent to local food pantries.

The effort was part of an initiative called "9/11 Day" that aimed to transform Sept. 11 from a day of tragedy to one of service. A co-founder, Jay Winuk, lost his brother, Glenn, in the attacks.

Glenn Winuk was a volunteer firefighter who was at home getting ready for work at Holland & Knight, the law firm where he was a partner, when he saw the first plane hit the North Tower on television. He ran to the scene and died trying to help evacuate his firm's offices in the South Tower.

"For me, personally, it's cathartic," Jay Winuk, 65, said of the service day he helped create. "It's a great tradition to hand off to the next generation, which is so important to us, because 100 million people in this country weren't even born when 9/11 happened."

Michelin Guide's Stars Bring Restaurants Glory, But They Come at a Cost

From Page A1

company has been aggressively seeking new ways to generate revenue, expand its geographic reach and modernize the idea of what makes a Michelin restaurant.

In interviews, dozens of restaurateurs, chefs and officials across the country said the status the stars confer is priceless, and comes with vast earning potential. But they also voiced reservations about Michelin's priorities and influence.

Curiosity has always swirled around how the company does its work: Who are the inspectors? How often do they visit? What does it take to rise from two stars to three? (The chefs Gordon Ramsay, Jean-Georges Vongerichten, Thomas Keller and Alain Ducasse all began their empires by winning three stars, the highest rating.)

Now, more sweeping questions are arising about what the guides mean in today's culinary world. Does the quest for stars generate excellence, or sameness? Do deals with the tourism industry and food brands suggest that Michelin's attention and the prestige it confers are at least partly for sale? And can the stars keep their luster as Michelin selectively expands its universe?

The Price of Admission

Gwendal Poullenec, the director of the guides, said in an interview that although the company accepts "partnership" money to offset the expenses of the review process, the decision about whether a region merits its own Michelin guide is determined solely by the company's inspectors, who "assess the maturity" of the culinary scene as a preliminary step.

Since publishing its first American guide, to New York City, in 2005, Michelin has moved into California, Washington, D.C., Chicago and Florida.

Mr. Poullenec said that "vibrancy" and "dynamic potential" are also taken into consideration, as an explanation of why rapidly growing Florida and Colorado — and Atlanta, coming next year — have guides, while New Orleans and New England do not.

A Michelin announcement about its Colorado guide last month declared, "Our anonymous Inspectors combed the Centennial State for the most delicious spots," But in fact, only restaurants in Denver, Boulder, Aspen, Vail, Snowmass and Beaver Creek were being considered.

Michelin's inspection process, and the firewall it long maintained between the guides and the restaurant industry — no free meals, no sponsors, no advertising — have given it a special status. It is a costly undertaking (which used to be financed by the sales of hundreds of thousands of hardcover guides per year), but it has convinced consumers and chefs that Michelin makes all its decisions impartially.

For Michelin's first century, that was largely true, including for the first New York City guide, in 2005, and the San Francisco Bay and Napa Valley guides in 2007. But only since 2019, when Visit California paid Michelin $600,000, have top restaurants in Los Angeles and elsewhere in the state earned stars.

So while it is still true that individual restaurants can't buy stars, tourism boards and hotel owners can buy the possibility.

In 2010, after the guides had been losing money for years, the parent company hired the consulting giant Accenture to assess their future. Soon, the Michelin Guide began to transform itself from an elite, arms-length critic of the restaurant industry to a financial partner.

Michelin began accepting money from sponsors like food brands, liquor distributors, hotel chains and tourism agencies. Michelin guides in Thailand, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore were all published with financial backing from local tourism authorities. Companies like Nestlé and Lavazza now sponsor Michelin awards like Rising Star Chef, Sommelier of the Year and Pastry Chef of the Year.

The director of the Colorado Tourism Office, Tim Wolfe, led the effort to bring Michelin to his state. Among Colorado's tourism boards and even its state restaurant association, the notion of restaurants — rather than ski slopes or rock faces — as travel destinations is rather new. But, he said, he knew that international visitors to Colorado spend five times more than domestic ones, so it was an easy call.

To get the guide, his agency agreed to contribute $100,000 a year for three years. Following suit were four tourism boards (Denver, Boulder, Aspen, Vail) and two resort companies (Snowmass and Beaver Creek); they told The New York Times that they each paid Michelin $70,000 to $100,000. Aurora and Colorado Springs, among others, declined to participate.

"I love all my children equally," Mr. Wolfe said. "But if Colorado Springs wanted to get involved, they have to get involved." Visit Aurora and Visit Colorado Springs declined to comment on their decisions.

The chef Brother Luck, the owner of three restaurants in Colorado Springs and a former "Top Chef" contestant, was appalled to see his city passed over.

"How do you leave out the second-largest city in the state?' he said. "It feels like a slap in the face."

Mr. Poullenec, the Michelin director, said Colorado Springs and other places left out of the guide have the option of joining next year.

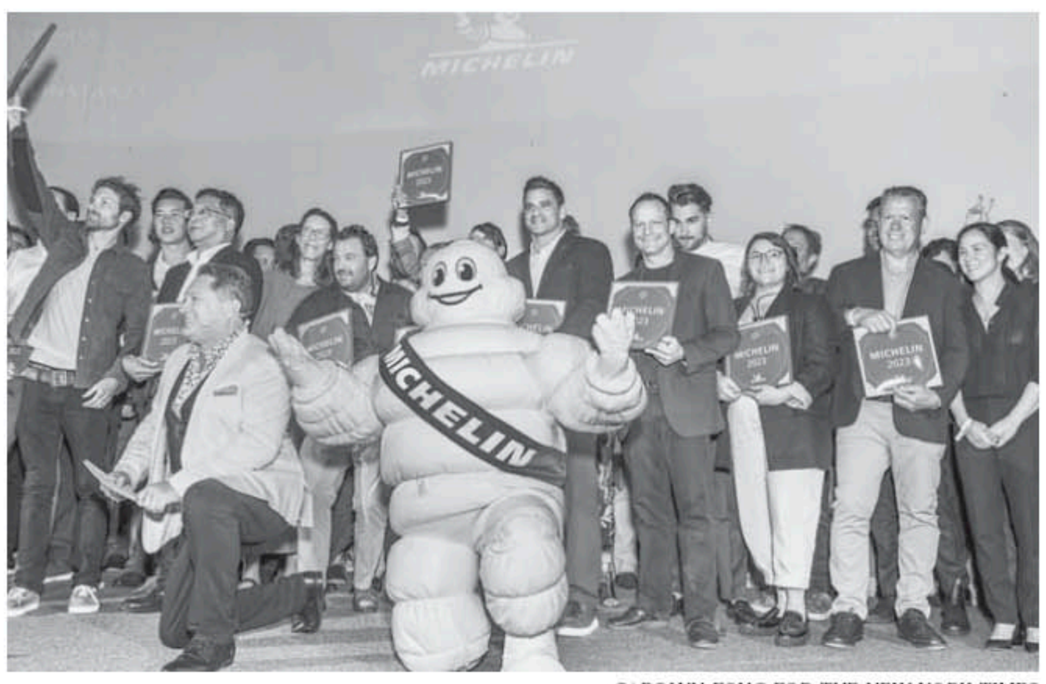
Changing Tastes

In Florida, which received its first round of Michelin stars in 2022, a similar situation played out. That state's guide was funded with more than $1.5 million from state and city tourism budgets, according to an investigation by The Miami Herald. As a result, only restaurants in the Miami, Tampa and Orlando areas were eligible for stars.

THEO STROOMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Caroline Glover at Annette, her restaurant in Aurora, Colo.

THEO STROOMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



CAROLYN FONG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Brother Luck at one of his restaurants, Four by Brother Luck, in Colorado Springs, above. The Michelin mascot at the announcement of the 2023 California stars in Oakland in July, below.

"I'm beyond disappointed — after the years I've put in carrying the torch for South Florida," said Timon Balloo, a chef who cooked in and around Miami for 35 years, creating the successful national chain Sugarcane Bar & Grill and Downtown Miami's popular Balloo before the pandemic forced him to move to Fort Lauderdale. He said that if he had known the move would make him ineligible for Michelin consideration, he would have fought harder to keep his footing in Miami.

Even some Miami chefs were disappointed at the inaugural ceremony, though. Michelin gave no restaurant three stars, and named only one with two stars: L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon, in Miami's Design District, an outpost of a global restaurant chain founded by a French chef who had been dead for four years.

"You could hear the air go out of the room," said the chef Niven Patel. "It was utter shock."

Amid decades of expansion, Michelin has maintained that its stars transcend geography, taste and trends; that a one-star restaurant in Hangzhou can (and must) have the same value as a one-star restaurant in Hamburg or Honfleur or Hialeah.

The star system — one, worth a stop; two, worth a detour; three, worth a journey — was devised more than a century ago to guide businessmen as they motored around France on the company's tires. Today, "when someone is flying from Germany to San Diego to eat at your restaurant, the stakes are much higher," said William Bradley, the chef-owner of Addison, Southern California's only three-star Michelin restaurant.

So are the costs. Michelin inspectors are full-time employees, and are sent around the world to perform evaluations, ensuring that no inspectors can privilege relationships or preferences in their own regions.

The challenge for Michelin seems to be balancing the high standards that give the brand its power with the imperative to expand into markets that may not have many restaurants that meet those standards. Mr. Poullenec said that Michelin's culinary and editorial judgments far outweigh financial considerations. "We need to grow, not compromise," he said.

One way Michelin is trying to meet that challenge is adding new awards. Restaurants noted for their environmental sustainability can now get a green star. Those that offer good value can earn the Bib Gourmand. In 2017, Michelin introduced a new category for restaurants deemed good, but not good enough for a star: briefly called Michelin Plate, but now simply Recommended.

Already the terms "Michelin-recommended and "Michelin-recognized" have become a common plaudit for the more than 16,600 restaurants that appear in the guide at every level. Of those, only 3,400 have stars, and just 142 have three.

In some ways, this expanding of the honors is a win-win. Unlike a James Beard award or a spot on the World's 50 Best Restaurants list, Michelin stars are something any number of restaurants can win, and keep on winning. More restaurants in more places get to flash the Michelin credentials, and Michelin gets to expand its reach and become a more widely recognized arbiter of quality.

But when thousands of vaguely recommended restaurants can call themselves "Michelin" destinations, Michelin may risk diluting its brand.

'Chasing the Validation'

Chefs began to publicly push back against Michelin around the turn of the 21st century, rejecting what they saw as its focus on luxurious trappings like foie gras and caviar, crystal glassware and linen hand towels.

In 1999, the celebrated British chef Marco Pierre White renounced his three stars, citing the pressure and monotony of maintaining them, and questioning the authority of inspectors. Next came the 2003 suicide of the French chef Bernard Loiseau, who believed that his restaurant was being demoted from three stars to two.

Recent objections have focused on the elaborate, multicourse menus that draw Michelin stars. They have historically relied on long hours of low-paid (sometimes unpaid) labor, raising questions about the human cost of fine dining. René Redzepi, the chef of Noma, in Copenhagen, decided to close the restaurant soon after it finally won its third star, citing the unsustainability of the business model.

Mr. Luck, the Colorado Springs chef, said the mental health costs of the restaurant business are already too high, without worrying about Michelin stars. "We have to protect the next generations," he said, adding. "I worry that chasing the validation of these standards and these stars can be dangerous."

Niki Nakayama of n/naka in Los Angeles said that while she longs to rise from two stars to three, she can't afford the upgrades she believes it would take: more courses, matching uniforms, more carefully arranged plates.

"Plating is a trajector of how money has influenced the business," she said. "The more labor you can afford for the tweezer work, the matching uniforms, the spotless glasses, the more Michelin stars you can hope for."

Many chefs and diners see a creeping sameness among Michelin-starred restaurants around the world, and not only in the consistently excellent ingredients and techniques that the guide says it rewards. Long menus of precomposed mouthfuls, tiny proteins and the ostentatiously arranged small plates satirized in "The Menu" have become the rule.

"At this point, we can all serve Japanese fish, we can all do knife work, we can all make a gelée," said Charlie Mitchell, the chef and co-owner of Clover Hill, in Brooklyn Heights. He said that since winning a star last year, he has had to fight the urge to make his food ever more Michelin-friendly rather than following his own instincts.

"I catch myself adding a purée, a tuile, an herb, a flower" to new plates, he said, "just to make it look more fine dining."

But most chefs said the opportunity Michelin offers for a steady supply of well-heeled diners, eager sous-chefs and endless publicity trumps any other concerns. And many say that having Michelin stars to strive for simply makes restaurants better.

"Not a lot of chefs here really deserve it yet," said Bo Porytko, the chef at Misfit Snackbar and Molotov in Denver, citing repetitious farm-to-table menus and timid seasoning. "But I hope it will push everyone to get better and be more adventurous."

Opinion

The New York Times

THE CONVERSATION | GAIL COLLINS AND BRET STEPHENS

Which Crisis Should We Talk About First?

ADREES LATIF/REUTERS

Bret Stephens: Hi, Gail. Democratic mayors and governors are warning the Biden administration that the migrants crossing our southern border are straining their cities and states to the breaking point. New York City alone is sheltering and feeding an average of 59,000 migrants a day. What's your advice to the White House?

Gail Collins: Easy stuff first, Bret. There are job openings many newcomers could fill in areas like food service, if they're given the ability to work. And the federal government needs to give stressed-out regions — particularly New York City — a whole lot more help when it comes to housing.

Bret: I'm definitely in favor of handing out work permits, if that's what you mean. Please go on.

Gail: Making more housing available has to include building new accommodations and transforming existing city buildings, both residential and those with unneeded office space. Over the long run, we absolutely have to open up options for multifamily housing in suburban areas that have long resisted it.

As to the border itself, President Biden is trying to tighten up the whole immigration process, but a lot of his initiatives have been challenged in court. The administration has expanded federal border resources in an effort to make processing families faster. Although of course there's still more that should be done.

OK, your turn.

Bret: Assuming the president wants to get re-elected, while preserving the possibility of immigration reform sometime in the next, oh, 100 years, he has to get control of the border. Right now. Jobs can take months to fill and housing takes years to build — not to mention that there are plenty of U.S. citizens who ought to be the administration's first priority when it comes to affordable housing.

In the meantime, we've had a 30-month crisis that too many Democrats downplayed until it became a blue-state problem. Millions of people have entered the country illegally and tens of thousands in New York are now living off government assistance. Working-class people are afraid they are going to be priced out of low-paying jobs by desperate migrants.

My advice to the president: Ask for the resignation of Alejandro Mayorkas, his failed homeland security secretary. Put a highly respected former military officer, like the retired admiral William McRaven, in the job. Call up 10,000 active duty troops to help police the border. Work with Mexico to further strengthen its border with Guatemala. And invest infrastructure funds to build that damned wall. Because if Biden doesn't get control of the border, it will become Donald Trump's signature — and possibly winning — issue in next year's campaign.

Gail: Ah, Bret, once again you lose me at the wall. Which isn't very useful at stopping migrants but is great as a symbol of our worst impulses — the evolution from our image as welcoming land of liberty to cranky neighbor warning the kids to stay out of his backyard.

Bret: It's one thing when several kids come into the cranky neighbor's backyard. It's quite another when several million do, then raid his fridge and medicine cabinet and never want to go home.

Gail: Speaking of kids — I know this is not a terrific segue — I guess we should discuss the Hunter Biden situation.

Bret: I think of it as two situations: the first about Hunter, the second about Joe.

Regarding the first, I don't see why the son of any president — but particularly a Democratic president who favors gun control and believes the rich should pay their taxes — should not face stiff penalties for blowing off paying his taxes and also for buying a gun while addicted to drugs.

The wall doesn't stop migrants and symbolizes our nation's worst impulses.

As for the second, at a minimum I'd like to know how the president's story went from "I've never spoken to my son about his overseas business dealings" to the White House's tacit admission that Hunter would put his dad on the line when speaking to business associates, ostensibly just to make small talk but very likely as a way of selling the Biden "brand." I'd also like to know why Biden used email aliases during his vice presidency to communicate with Hunter. The answers might well turn out to be innocent. But that's all the more reason to respond to the questions rather than evade them.

Gail: We definitely have two different Hunter Biden issues: what punishment he deserves and how much of an impact his messy saga should have on our opinion of his father.

Bret: The father who, I should underscore, I will probably find myself voting for next year barring the miracle of a Nikki Haley or Chris Christie candidacy on the Republican line. Go on.

Gail: As to the first, we have a guy who lied, when filling out the paperwork to buy a gun, about whether he was a drug addict. And who failed to pay all his 2017 and 2018 taxes. Hunter was going to get 24 months probation, until his plea deal collapsed.

This is a combo for which low-income folks with no friends in high places would probably get a stiffer punishment. But I am also sure that any Republican senator's son who got in similar trouble would not in a billion years go to jail.

Do you disagree?

Bret: I'm sure you're right — and that's wrong in itself. But Hunter definitely deserved stiffer punishment than the wrist-slap he seemed on his way to getting before his plea bargain fell apart this summer.

Gail: On the second count, it is pretty clear that Joe Biden helped Hunter get some business cred by reminding potential clients that Dad was vice president.

Bret: Meaning that Joe could have been turning himself into a willing participant in some pretty shady business dealings in places like Ukraine, where he was supposed to be the Obama administration's point man for fighting corruption.

Gail: Even if that's the version of the saga voters buy, I find it extremely hard to imagine this is going to have any impact on the president's re-election prospects. You have here a guy who lost his first wife and a daughter in a terrible car crash and his beloved older son after a long cancer battle. Don't think most Americans will hold his attempts to aid the surviving son against him. While he's running against a man whose family profited shamelessly from foreign business ties during the presidency.

Bret: I truly feel for the president when it comes to the tragedies in his life. And I have zero sympathy for Trump or his sleazy family. But that doesn't change the fact that Hunter is also sleazy and that, at a minimum, Joe shouldn't make a habit of having Hunter constantly by his side.

Gail: I know the Republicans can't let a day go by without howling about Hunter, but I truly don't think the country cares.

Bret: Not sure you're right about that. Democrats are really underestimating the impact this could have on the election. A CNN poll published last week found that 61 percent of Americans think Joe was involved in Hunter's business dealings and that 55 percent think he acted inappropriately regarding the investigation into Hunter. What that does is to diminish Biden's claim to represent honesty and decency in the White House. A similar thing happened in 2016 when Democrats went after Trump on his sexual ethics, and Trump struck back by bringing Juanita Broaddrick to his second debate with Hillary Clinton, to remind the country about Bill's sexual ethics. The risk is that undecided voters conclude that both sides are morally tainted so they may as well vote their pocketbook interests.

Gail: I just feel the only people who are going to vote against Biden because of Hunter are people who were going to vote against Biden for something anyway.

Bret: Different subject, Gail. Nancy Pelosi just announced she intends to run for re-election, when she'll be 84. I realize she's no longer in a leadership position, but given Mitch McConnell's and Dianne Feinstein's and, well, Joe Biden's diminished capacities, wouldn't it be better for her to retire in good health and make way for someone a little younger?

Gail: The super-important fact about Nancy Pelosi's career decision is that she opted to give up one of the nation's most powerful posts because she felt a younger leader could do it better.

Bret: True, and she deserves credit for that. I'd still suggest she take a look at some of her generational peers in politics, including McConnell and Feinstein, and ask herself if that's the best way to walk off the political stage.

Gail: The nation is growing older and people need to believe that they can step aside for the next generation of leaders without totally retiring from public life. So, hey, I'm a Pelosi rooter on this front.

Bret: I'll defer to you on this subject. And speaking of immortality, I need to put in a word for Rebecca Chace's wonderful obituary of Edith Grossman, the great translator of Gabriel García Márquez and Miguel de Cervantes. I started reading García Márquez in Spanish as a kid — he lived just a few blocks from us on the south side of Mexico City — and then I read some of the same books in her English translations when I was a bit older. Grossman's translations somehow managed to make him a more vivid, lucid, enchanting writer.

She wasn't just a translator. She was an artist.

COLUMNIST | MICHELLE GOLDBERG

The Straitjacket of Minority Rule

ONE OF THE MOST influential books of the Trump years was "How Democracies Die" by the Harvard government professors Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt. Published in 2018, it served as a guide to our unfolding ordeal. "Over the past two years, we have watched politicians say and do things that are unprecedented in the United States — but that we recognize as having been the precursors of democratic crisis in other places," they wrote.

Because that volume was prescient about how Donald Trump would try to rule, I was surprised to learn, in Levitsky and Ziblatt's new book, "Tyranny of the Minority," that they were shocked by Jan. 6. Though they've studied violent insurrections all over the world, they write in this new book, "we never imagined we'd see them here. Nor did we ever imagine that one of America's two major parties would turn away from democracy in the 21st century."

What astonished them the most, Levitsky told me in an interview last week, "was the speed and the degree to which the Republican Party Trumpized." In "How Democracies Die," he and Ziblatt had reproved Republicans for failing to stop Trump's rise to power. But at the time, he said, "we didn't consider or call the Republican Party an authoritarian party. We did not expect it to transform so quickly and so thoroughly."

"Tyranny of the Minority" is their attempt to make sense of how American democracy eroded so fast. "Societal diversity, cultural backlash and extreme-right parties are ubiquitous across established Western democracies," they write. But in recent years, only in America has a defeated leader attempted a coup. And only in America is the coup leader likely to once again be the nominee of a major party. "Why did America, alone among rich established democracies, come to the brink?" they ask.

A disturbing part of the answer, Levitsky and Ziblatt conclude, lies in our Constitution, the very document Americans rely on to defend us from autocracy. "Designed in a predemocratic era, the U.S. Constitution allows partisan minorities to routinely thwart majorities, and sometimes even *govern* them," they write. The Constitution's countermajoritarian provisions, combined with profound geographic polarization, have locked us into a crisis of minority rule.

Liberals — myself very much included — have been preoccupied by minority rule for years now, and you're probably aware of the ways it manifests. Republicans have won the popular vote in only one out of the last eight presidential elections, and yet have had three Electoral College victories. The Senate gives far more power to small, rural states than large, urbanized ones, and it's made even less democratic by the filibuster. An unaccountable Supreme Court, given its right-wing majority by the two-time popular-vote loser Trump, has gutted the Voting Rights Act. One reason Republicans keep radicalizing is that, unlike Democrats, they don't need to win over the majority of voters.

All liberal democracies have *some* countermajoritarian institutions to stop popular passions from running roughshod over minority rights. But as "Tyranny of the Minority" shows, our system is unique in the way it empowers a minority ideological faction at the expense of everyone else. And while conservatives like to pretend that their structural advantages arise from the judicious wisdom of the founders, Levitsky and Ziblatt demonstrate how many of the least democratic aspects of American governance are the result of accident, contingency and, not least, capitulation to the slaveholding South.

It's worth remembering that in 2000, when many thought George W. Bush might win the popular vote but lose in the Electoral College, Republicans did not intend to quietly accept the results. "I think there would be outrage," Representative Ray LaHood, a Republican from Illinois, told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. The Bush camp planned to stoke a "popular uprising," in the words of The Daily News, quoting a Bush aide: "The one thing we don't do is roll over. We fight."

Most Democrats, however, feel little choice but to acquiesce to a system tilted against them. Depending on the Constitution for protection from the worst abuses of the right, they're reluctant to delegitimize it. Besides, America's Constitution is among the hardest in the world to change, another of its countermajoritarian qualities.

A new book reveals why the authors of 'How Democracies Die' overestimated the Republicans.

Levitsky and Ziblatt don't have any shortcuts for emerging from the straitjacket of minority rule. Rather, they call on readers to engage in the glacial slog of constitutional reform. Some people, Ziblatt told me, might think that working toward institutional reforms is naïve. "But the thing that I think is really naïve is to think that we can just sort of keep going down this path and that things will just work out," he said.

Personally, I don't know anyone who is confident that things will just work out. It's possible that, as The New York Times reports, Trump's Electoral College edge is fading because of his relative weakness in battleground states, but he could still, running on a nakedly authoritarian platform, be re-elected with a minority of the vote. I asked Levitsky and Ziblatt how, given their work on democracy, they imagine a second Trump term unfolding.

"I think the United States faces a high risk of serious and repeated constitutional crisis, what I would call regime instability, quite possibly accompanied by some violence," said Levitsky. "I'm not as worried about the consolidation of autocracy, Hungary or Russia-style. I think that the opposition forces, civil society forces, are probably too strong for that." Let's hope that this time he's not being too optimistic.

Musk Has Crossed a Line

David Austin Walsh
The author of the forthcoming book "Taking America Back: The Conservative Movement and the Far Right."

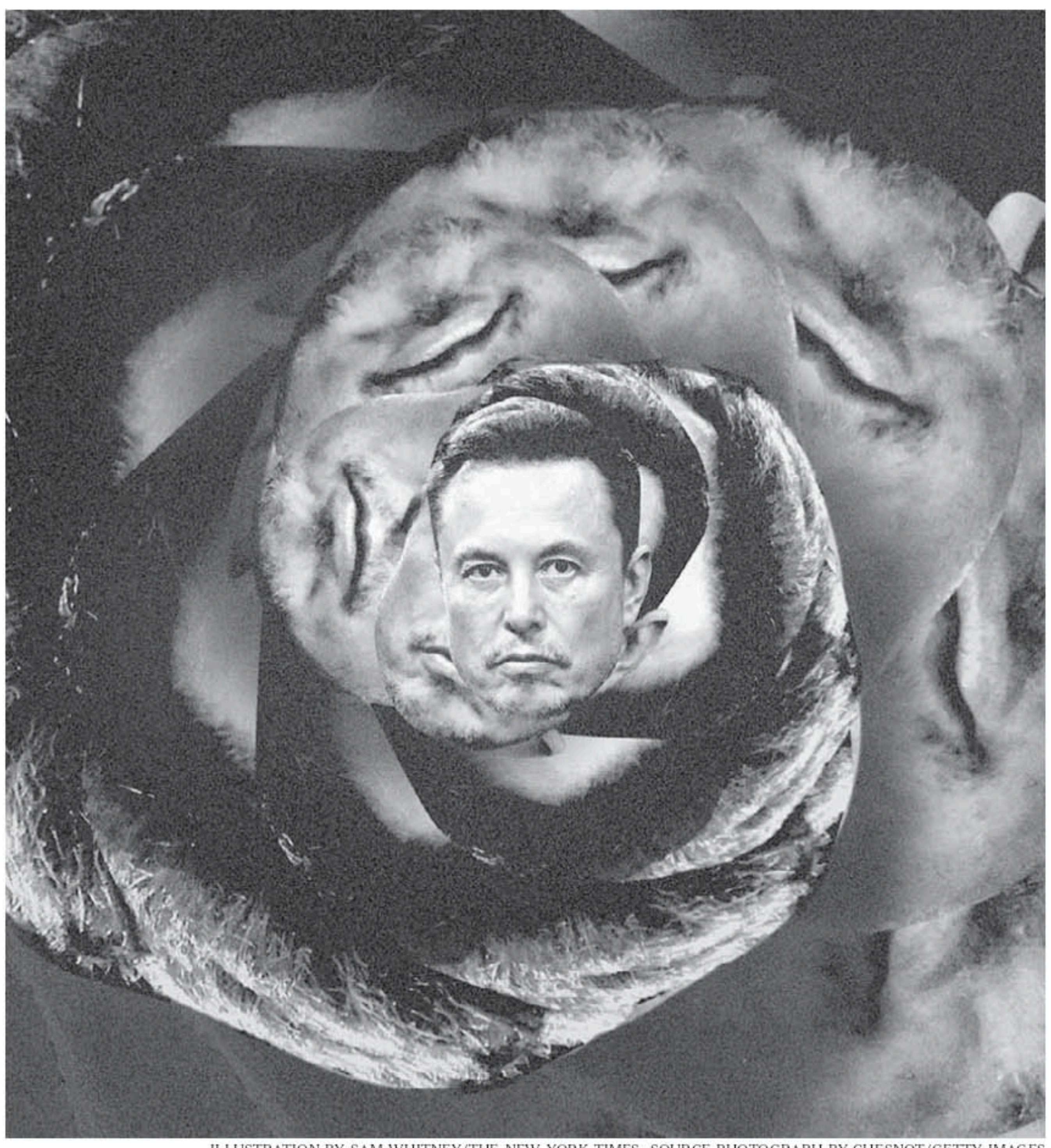


ILLUSTRATION BY SAM WHITNEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES; SOURCE PHOTOGRAPH BY CHESNOT/GETTY IMAGES

ELON MUSK, one of the world's richest men who is now most famous for running the website X, formerly known as Twitter, has a new excuse for the company's shaky performance since he bought it last year. The problem, according to Mr. Musk, is the Jews.

In an outburst on his platform last week, Mr. Musk claimed — without presenting any evidence — that ad revenues on the website are down 60 percent "primarily due to pressure on advertisers by @ADL" — the Anti-Defamation League — which he said "has been trying to kill this platform by falsely accusing it & me of being anti-Semitic."

While the website has long had a reputation as a cesspool for lies, hate speech and a significant neo-Nazi user base, under a former chief executive officer, Jack Dorsey, Twitter had begun to take steps to ban the most provocative and openly racist and antisemitic users. A 2018 report by the ADL noted that 4.2 million antisemitic tweets had been shared or re-shared on the platform in the previous year, before Twitter's ban on extremist accounts took effect. Mr. Musk largely reversed those policies under the aegis of free speech. Thanks to the reinstatement of extremist accounts — and a new algorithm that prioritizes posts from "verified" users who have forked over $8 a month to the company — X/Twitter now functions as a bullhorn for the most toxic elements of the white nationalist right.

Mr. Musk also blamed the ADL for a collapse in the company's value — estimates place the company's current worth at roughly one-third the $44 billion Mr. Musk paid for it — saying that he was considering legal action against the ADL and signaling that he supported banning the organization from X.

Mr. Musk insists that his claims are not antisemitic and that he harbors no animus toward the Jews; still, over the past week he has repeatedly made personal attacks against the ADL head, Jonathan Greenblatt, accusing him of lying about the organization's political influence.

There is a long history of far-right groups attacking the ADL for alleged "smears." In the late 1950s Russell Maguire, the owner of the right-wing American Mercury magazine, claimed Jewish groups were falsely smearing him and his publication as antisemitic — and, like Mr. Musk, suggested they were organizing a boycott against him. A few years later, in the mid-1960s, Robert Welch, the leader of the far-right John Birch Society, similarly claimed that the ADL was unfairly smearing his organization's reputation by alleging it was harboring antisemites in its ranks.

The ADL was certainly critical of both men — but for good reasons. Mr. Maguire was, in fact, a committed antisemite. He endorsed the authenticity of the infamous antisemitic tract "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" in his magazine. Mr. Welch, in large part due to pressure from the ADL, was forced to purge the John Birch Society of its most outspoken antisemites in 1966. Considering that Mr. Musk has reinstated and retweeted a number of openly antisemitic and white nationalist accounts since acquiring the website, his attacks on the ADL are very much in keeping with this tradition.

The Anti-Defamation League is not the only organization that monitors far-right speech, nor has it been alone in drawing Mr. Musk's ire and that of the online far right on Twitter. The Southern Poverty Law Center, founded by civil rights activists in the 1970s, employs a group of researchers to monitor and catalog right-wing extremism and has long been the target of attacks by neo-Nazis and white supremacists. And yet the S.P.L.C., a nonsectarian organization, has not been singled out by Mr. Musk.

Part of the reason is that the ADL, until relatively recently, was ambivalent — even supportive — of Mr. Musk. In 2022 Mr. Greenblatt of the ADL *praised* the billionaire entrepreneur. In comments on CNBC, Mr. Greenblatt called Mr. Musk an "amazing entrepreneur, an extraordinary innovator. He's the Henry Ford of our time."

Henry Ford, of course, became famous as the creative genius behind the Ford Motor Company. And, like Mr. Musk, Mr. Ford was a veritable celebrity. In the same way that Mr. Musk's fanboys on his platform gush about how his company SpaceX will lead humanity into a cosmic future, Mr. Ford was seen as the apostle of industrial modernity. Joseph Stalin sought out experts from the Ford Motor Company to help industrialize the Soviet Union in the late 1920s. Aldous Huxley dated the calendar in his 1932 dystopian novel "Brave New World" "A.F." — "After Ford."

The owner of X is now scapegoating Jews for his platform's money troubles.

Mr. Ford was also — next to Charles Lindbergh — one of America's most infamous antisemites of the 20th century, and Mr. Greenblatt was pilloried by liberal and left-wing critics for failing to note this.

Despite Mr. Greenblatt's tone-deaf lauding of Mr. Musk as the second coming of Henry Ford, the ADL has been justifiably concerned with monitoring Twitter as one of the major global forums for antisemitism since Mr. Musk's takeover. The platform's historical free-for-all approach to speech, while it has allowed for previously marginalized voices to be major players in media narratives, has also allowed for new opportunities for open antisemites and racists, hitherto confined to websites for true believers. Twitter was not the only social media platform to flirt with extremism — Facebook infamously became a vector of disinformation during the 2016 election — but it was unique in its power to shape media narratives.

What explains Mr. Musk's questionable decision making? It does not take much of a leap to imagine that an immensely wealthy businessman — one who strongly believes in his own messianic mission to uplift humanity and who is facing intense and sustained public criticism over his politics and business acumen for the first time in decades — might conclude that nefarious forces are at work to undermine him. What separates this simple scapegoating from full-blown conspiracism is the sense one gets from Mr. Musk and his acolytes that criticism of him imperils the utopian future of mankind. That, combined with the fact that Mr. Musk has been consistently boosting far-right, white nationalist and antisemitic accounts on Twitter since the beginning of his tenure, effectively melds his sense of victimhood with the conspiratorial antisemitism of the most toxic elements of the right.

X, nee Twitter, despite losing significant value because of Mr. Musk's incompetence and having to contend with rivals like Meta's Threads, is *still* the most influential social media platform in shaping the national news narrative. As Kanye West, himself no stranger to making unhinged antisemitic statements, has said, "No one man should have all that power."

The Republican Party already has a serious problem with some campaign staff members openly trafficking in antisemitic and white nationalist speech. Mr. Musk scapegoating the Jews for his own catastrophic business decisions regarding his management of one of the most influential social media platforms in the world will only add fuel to the fire.

LETTERS

Mayor Adams and the Migrant Crisis

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Adams Says Migrant Crisis 'Will Destroy' the City" (news article, Sept. 8):

New York has welcomed immigrants arriving in the United States in search of safety, hope and opportunity for centuries. Mayor Eric Adams's claim that the migrant issue will "destroy New York City" is dangerous and intentionally dividing our diverse communities that are known to work together in the face of adversity.

It is clear that overheated rhetoric and divisive, xenophobic proposals are poisoning opportunities to constructively welcome migrants in New York.

In this pivotal moment, we must strive for inclusive and compassionate policies that reflect the true spirit of New York. The mayor and others must consider the far-reaching implications of incendiary rhetoric and embrace opportunities to build a more united, equitable city for all. The path to such policies already exists.

New York lawmakers have a unique opportunity to demonstrate true historic leadership by responding with practical policy solutions to support strength and stability for immigrants and all New Yorkers, countering harmful rhetoric with humane and beneficial solutions: investing in emergency services for stability; investing in a stable legal services infrastructure, including passing the Access to Representation Act in New York and supporting the federal Fairness to Freedom Act; and advocating for federal action on work authorization.

SHAYNA KESSLER, BROOKLYN

The writer is associate director of advocacy at the Vera Institute of Justice.

TO THE EDITOR:

Mayor Eric Adams says the influx of asylum seekers will "destroy New York City." Not the glaring socioeconomic inequality. Nor the crisis in affordable housing that drives New Yorkers away. Nor the storefronts kept vacant because of the exorbitant rents from landlords and developers. Nor the boom of empty luxury apartments bought for tax write-offs. Nor the dilapidated and unreliable subways with their frequent breakdowns and delays.

No, Mayor Adams prefers to pander to the developers, the moneyed class and the NIMBY crowd. It's much safer to blame New York City's problems on the tired, the poor and the huddled masses yearning to breathe free.

C.K. KERNS, BRONX

TO THE EDITOR:

Instead of worrying about providing ammunition to Republicans, why not just acknowledge that the Republicans are right, which is why so many Democrats sound like Republicans on this issue?

ANDREA ECONOMOS
HARTSDALE, N.Y.

Biden's Silence

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Dignified Silence Doesn't Work Against 'the Last Guy'" (column, Sept. 7):

Charles M. Blow criticizes President Biden for his silence on Donald Trump's indictments. Until Mr. Trump is found guilty as charged, he's presumed innocent, and Mr. Biden must maintain a "dignified silence" on the charges against him.

Mr. Biden would be just as wrong to use his bully pulpit against Mr. Trump as he would be to use it against anyone else who's being prosecuted by his administration's Justice Department.

The special counsel Jack Smith has accused Mr. Trump of making daily statements that "threaten to prejudice the jury pool" in the election-interference case against him. Mr. Biden would be equally at fault if he says anything about any of the cases pending against Mr. Trump.

Mr. Biden's silence is not just dignified; it's responsible.

STEPHEN SHENDER
APTOS, CALIF.

Kids and Online Porn

TO THE EDITOR:

As someone who has spent the last year educating kids and their parents about how to stay safe online, I was pleased to see "Ban Online Porn for Kids," by David French (column, Sept. 4).

While legislation restricting children from using online pornography sites would be an excellent start, it is the bare minimum of what is needed.

Young children are using the internet, YouTube, gaming apps and Google Chat not merely for fun but also to complete assignments. Unfortunately, they are not trained to identify the red flags of scammers and exploiters who are present wherever children are online.

Additionally, the F.B.I. is currently seeing "a huge increase" in teens being sexually and financially exploited on gaming, dating, social media and messaging apps. Most major social media apps request that users are at least 13 years old. However, anyone of any age can access much of the content from these sites without an account.

We need better digital education that begins when young children are first engaging with the internet. Government protections are an important start, but schools need to add curriculum for every grade to keep kids safe in an ever-changing digital landscape.

CATHERINE PEARLMAN
LAGUNA NIGUEL, CALIF.

The writer is a clinical social worker and the author of "First Phone: A Child's Guide to Digital Responsibility, Safety and Etiquette."

Recycling Plastics

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Debunking the 'Recycling Myth,' Starting With Its Symbol" (news article, Sept. 3):

The environmental impact of the plastics recyclability crisis cannot be overstated. Analysis of 35 years of data from Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup shows that 70 percent of the most common items polluting shorelines worldwide are effectively unrecyclable. Unsurprisingly, multiple scientific studies conclude that we need plastics collection and recycling to work for the health of our ocean and climate.

Ultimately, to tackle plastic pollution *and* increase recycling rates, we need to make fewer plastics, especially those unrecyclable single-use items that are polluting our environment in astronomical quantities, like plastic bags and foam foodware. Eliminating such items would actually help boost recycling rates by decreasing contamination.

Consider, for example, that a new Ocean Conservancy report estimates that Americans are unknowingly contaminating the recycling stream with more than two billion pieces of foam each year.

Truth-in-labeling laws like California's, which will prohibit companies from placing recycling symbols on products that are not widely recycled, are critical, but only as part of a holistic approach that starts with eliminating the most problematic items altogether and requiring producers to make the rest truly recyclable.

ANJA BRANDON
PORTLAND, ORE.

The writer is associate director of U.S. Plastics Policy at Ocean Conservancy.

Don't Glorify Football

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "The N.F.L.'s New Kickoff Rule Is Terrible," by Matthew Walther (Opinion guest essay, Sept. 10):

It is the American version of football itself that is terrible.

Was Mr. Walther serious about football embodying a feeling of "sublime contentedness"? Did he have his tongue in cheek writing that "football, with its stylized warfare between city-states, its ritualized celebration of morally ambivalent heroes, its trophies and its encouragement of a quasi-pagan fatalism in the face of defeat, is among the only vestiges of our classical inheritance"?

American football is a violent activity (calling it a sport or a game does not capture its violence) that leads to lifelong injuries for many young men, much like real war. It should not be glorified.

MICHAEL E. MAHLER
LOS ANGELES

The Times welcomes letters from readers. Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Those selected may be edited, and shortened to fit allotted space. Email: letters@nytimes.com

COLUMNIST | PAUL KRUGMAN

How Goldilocks Came to the U.S. Economy

EARLY THIS YEAR many economists held a very grim view about the prospects for reducing inflation without a major economic slowdown and a big rise in unemployment. One prominent economist declared that underlying inflation was at least 4.5 percent and that "all the hoped-for saviors" — that is, forces that might bring inflation down painlessly — "have come and gone." Inflation, another declared, would be "sticky around 4 to 5 percent."

Given those expectations, what actually happened amounts to a minor, or maybe not so minor, miracle. Growth, both in gross domestic product and in jobs, has remained solid. But standard measures of underlying inflation are now under 3 percent and falling. Fancier statistical models maintained by the New York Fed tell the same story, and say that underlying inflation has fallen by half since its peak last year.

Now, there may be some bumps in the months ahead, largely involving technical issues. Government statisticians have no trouble estimating, say, the price of eggs; but while they do their best, the methods they use to estimate the prices of services, such as health care, can sometimes produce implausible results that add noise to the data. No, the cost of health insurance didn't fall 30 percent over the past year. And given noisy data, there may be a few bad inflation numbers in our future.

Nonetheless, the dramatic fall in underlying inflation this year is clearly real, and corroborated by many sources, notably business surveys. Voters, especially Republicans, may believe or claim to believe that inflation is still rising, but while this belief may be politically important, it's just wrong.

So the big economic question of the moment is: What went right? How did Goldilocks come to the U.S. economy?

As an important new paper from Mike Konczal of the Roosevelt Institute points out, there are two main stories out there that might explain why U.S. inflation has come down so quickly and painlessly. For what it's worth, these stories aren't after-the-fact rationalizations, cobbled together to make sense of events nobody expected. On the contrary, several economists, myself included, were telling these stories even during the winter of our inflation discontent, arguing that the kind of soft landing — disinflation without recession — we now seem to be experiencing was indeed possible.

So score one for the optimists. But for reasons I'll explain in a minute, it matters which of these two optimistic stories was right.

One of the two optimistic stories goes under the unlovely name of the "nonlinear Phillips curve." To put that in something resembling English, in normal times there seems to be a negative relationship between unemployment and inflation, but it's pretty weak, implying that the Federal Reserve's strategy of cooling inflation by raising interest rates, and hence reducing overall demand, would have to cause a lot of unemployment to get inflation back down to an acceptable level. The claim, however, is that in an overheated economy, which we seemed to have last year, the relationship between unemployment and inflation gets much stronger, so that the Fed might need to cause only a modest rise in unemployment to yield a big decline in inflation.

What happened amounts to a minor, or maybe not so minor, miracle.

The other optimistic story has, I believe, a better name, although I would say that, since I think I coined it myself: long transitory, a play on long Covid. This is the argument that as late as early 2023 inflation was still elevated because of lingering supply disruptions from the pandemic, but that inflation is coming down now because the economy is finally normalizing.

There could well be truth to both ideas. But the nonlinear Phillips curve explains why inflation might fall with only a small rise in unemployment; it doesn't do as well in explaining what we've actually seen, which is falling inflation without any rise in unemployment at all. (The small uptick in August was probably just a statistical blip.)

Konczal tries to resolve the issue by comparing disinflation across different goods and services. He argues that if improving supply as pandemic effects fade is the main story, we should see inflation falling fastest for goods and services whose consumption has risen the most, because their availability has increased. And that is in fact what we see.

Why does this dispute among inflation optimists matter? Because of concerns that inflation might reaccelerate if the economy stays strong.

After all, if you believe that inflation fell rapidly because of cooling demand, you have to worry that if the economy heats up again, say, because the Fed stops its rate hikes too soon, inflation could quickly rebound. That's much less of a concern if we're mainly seeing the effects of post-Covid normalization.

So what I see as growing evidence in favor of the long transitory story is reassuring. That said, of course, policymakers need to stay vigilant.

This argument probably isn't over. What shouldn't be an issue, however, is the proposition that inflation has come down far faster than pessimists predicted, at no visible cost.

Advertisement

Child sexual abuse is stored on iCloud.

Apple allows it.

ProtectChildrenNotAbuse.org

3 **AUTOMOTIVE**
In a boost to Britain's car industry, BMW said it would invest $750 million to build electric Minis in Oxford.

3 **REGULATION**
A judge ruled that the consumer protection agency is going too far in trying to guard against discrimination.

7 **SPORTS**
Joey Votto, a longtime Reds star, has taken his meticulous on-field approach to planning unique skits on social media.

Business
The New York Times

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 B1

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How the iPhone Defied Gravity and Dominated

Despite its high prices, Apple has increased its share, converting Android users and hooking teenagers.

By TRIPP MICKLE

There's a general rule about consumer electronics: The older a device becomes, the more competitors appear and prices fall. This was true for televisions, personal computers and portable music players.

It was supposed to happen with smartphones. But the iPhone has defied gravity.

On Tuesday, Apple will unveil the 17th iteration of its flagship product. Remarkably, at an age in which most consumer devices have lost some of their appeal to users, Apple has increased its share of smartphone sales over less expensive rivals.

Over the past five years, the iPhone has increased its percentage of total smartphones sold around the world while expanding its share of sales in four of the world's largest regions: China, Japan, Europe and India.

In the United States, the iPhone's largest market, the device now accounts for more than 50 percent of smartphones sold, up from 41 percent in 2018, according to Counterpoint Research, a technology firm. The gains have helped it claim about a fifth of the world's smartphone sales, up from a low of 13 percent in 2019.

Apple has expanded its smartphone empire as the broader industry has faltered. Over the past two years, sales of Android smartphones have plummeted, but the

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4

GUILLEM CASASUS

TikTok Shop Aims to Turn Influencing Into Sales

By SAPNA MAHESHWARI

TikTok wooed marketers from companies like Madewell, H&M and Gucci last Wednesday as part of New York Fashion Week, transforming the stylish East Village restaurant Cathédrale with a video wall showcasing fashion trends like "little luxuries" and tall mannequins wearing TikTok-inspired styles.

TikTok has cemented itself as an essential advertising venue for brands aiming to reach its young users. But at the party, the marketers were abuzz about TikTok's efforts to sell products from the app itself.

The reason: After nearly a year of testing, speculation and some internal upheaval, TikTok this week is rolling out TikTok Shop for all users in the United States. The company will expand the rollout of a Shop button on the app's home screen, which sends people to a marketplace, and drive traffic to videos that contain Shop buttons for specific products. Both enable users to buy products in a few clicks without leaving the app.

E-commerce is a significant bet for the company, which is hoping

CONTINUED ON PAGE B5

China Said To Repress IPhone Use

By Keith Bradsher, Chris Buckley and Tripp Mickle

China has discouraged the use of foreign-made electronic devices by government officials for a decade. It has told agencies and state-owned companies to replace American computer servers and other devices with domestic ones. And officials frequently show off to Americans their phones made by Huawei, China's cellphone giant.

Now, some employees of government agencies said they have received directives not to use Apple iPhones for work. Internet users in China also have been circulating accounts and screenshots said to contain notices to government employees and state-owned businesses ordering or urging them to adopt domestic brands of cellphones and computers for their work.

Chinese authorities have issued no public pronouncements about broader restrictions on iPhones. The suggestion that Apple could lose ground in the valuable Chi-

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4

Charter Ends Stalemate With Disney

By BENJAMIN MULLIN

Disney and Charter said Monday that they had reached a deal to resolve their programming dispute, ending a skirmish that raised questions about the future of cable television.

The two sides said their new deal meant that Charter's nearly 15 million cable TV subscribers would be able to watch programming from Disney's channels, which include FX and ESPN. The agreement was reached hours before the kickoff of "Monday Night Football," one of the most popular telecasts in the United States.

"This deal recognizes both the continued value of linear television and the growing popularity of streaming services while addressing the evolving needs of our consumers," Robert A. Iger, Disney's chief executive, and Chris Winfrey, Charter's chief executive, said in a joint statement.

For more than a week, Disney and Charter, one of the biggest cable companies in the United

CONTINUED ON PAGE B5

The Digest

AIR TRAVEL

JetBlue Steps Up Effort To Acquire Spirit Airlines

JetBlue Airways said on Monday that it has reached an agreement to turn over Spirit Airlines' operations at airports in Boston and Newark, as JetBlue ramps up its effort to win regulatory or court approval to buy Spirit.

JetBlue C.E.O. Robin Hays said the announcement "is aimed at removing any doubt of our commitment to promoting competition."

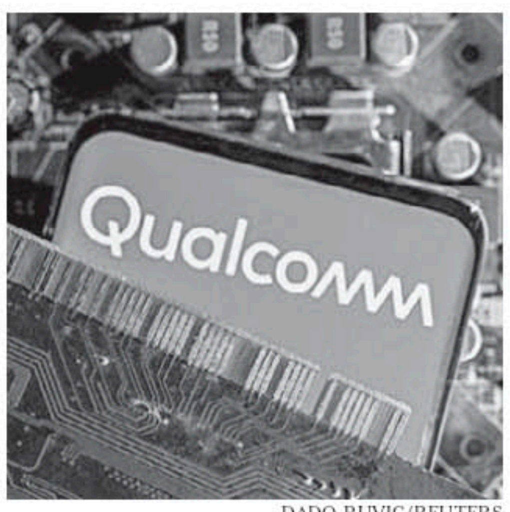
The U.S. Justice Department is suing to block JetBlue's proposed $3.8 billion purchase of Spirit, arguing that it will hurt competition and raise prices by eliminating Spirit, the nation's biggest discount airline. Lawyers for two dozen consumers have filed a similar lawsuit in the same court.

Under the deal, Allegiant would acquire Spirit's two gates at Boston's Logan Airport and two gates and takeoff and landing rights at Newark Liberty Airport.

Financial terms were not disclosed, but JetBlue said the deal is contingent on its acquisition of Spirit. *ASSOCIATED PRESS*

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Qualcomm Extends Deal To Supply Chips to Apple



DADO RUVIC/REUTERS

Qualcomm said on Monday that it had signed a deal with Apple to supply 5G chips until at least 2026, at a time when the iPhone maker faces increased challenges in China and looks to reinforce its supply chains elsewhere.

The deal extends a relationship worth billions of dollars to Qualcomm for at least three years, and indicates Apple is not rushing out its own modem, despite moving all its computers to processing chips of its own design.

Under the accord announced Monday, Qualcomm said it will supply Apple with chips for phones that will come out each year until 2026. Qualcomm did not disclose the value of the deal, saying only that the terms are "similar" to its previous agreement.

Apple is working on its own modem technology and spent $1 billion to buy Intel's modem unit in 2019. Apple has not said how quickly it plans to ramp up the use of its own chips. *REUTERS*

CAPITAL MARKETS

Truist's Cost-Cutting Plan Includes 'Sizable' Layoffs

Truist Financial is planning "sizable reductions" to its work force over the next few months to save roughly $300 million in costs, and said the bank's revenue for the current quarter was likely to be in line with its expectations.

The layoffs will be underway from the current quarter to the first quarter of 2024, Truist said in a presentation to investors on Monday.

"Other cost savings initiatives include aggressively managing third-party spend, further reducing our corporate real estate footprint and rationalizing tech spend," Truist's chief executive, Bill Rogers, said at the Barclays Financial Services Conference.

Analysts at Goldman Sachs said the expense program helps provide a "credible" path to holding costs relatively flat.

Truist added that along with tech optimization and organizational simplification, it will yield a combined $750 million in savings over 12 to 18 months. *REUTERS*

S&P 500 INDEX
+0.7%
4,487.46

DOW JONES INDUSTRIALS
+0.3%
34,663.72

NASDAQ COMPOSITE INDEX
+1.1%
13,917.89

10-YEAR TREASURY YIELD
4.28%
+0.023 points

CRUDE OIL (U.S.)
$87.29
−$0.22

GOLD (N.Y.)
$1,947.20
+$4.50

Stocks & Bonds

Rising Big Tech Helps Markets Claw Back Some of Losses

By The Associated Press

The S&P 500 Index

Position of the S&P 500 index at 1-minute intervals on Monday

Source: FactSet
THE NEW YORK TIMES

A rally for Big Tech stocks on Monday helped Wall Street claw back about half its loss from last week.

The S&P 500 rose 29.97, or 0.7 percent, to 4,487.46, coming off its first losing week in the last three. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 87.13 points, or 0.3 percent, to 34,663.72, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 156.37, or 1.1 percent, to 13,917.89.

Like last week, some big technology-oriented stocks led the way. Tesla jumped 10.1 percent, Amazon climbed 3.5 percent and Meta Platforms rose 3.2 percent.

Tech stocks were at the head of the line leading the market lower last week as yields climbed. Higher yields hurt all kinds of stocks, but high-growth stocks tend to be among the hardest hit. Yields rose last week after reports showed the U.S. economy remains stronger than expected, which could be adding more fuel to pressures keeping inflation high.

This upcoming week will offer a huge data point for the Federal Reserve, which is weighing whether to keep raising interest rates in its effort to get inflation back to 2 percent. On Wednesday, the U.S. government will offer the latest monthly update on prices consumers are paying across the economy, and the forecast is they were 3.6 percent higher in August than a year earlier.

The Fed has already hiked its main interest rate to the highest level in more than two decades, and it has said it will make coming moves based on how inflation and other parts of the economy perform. Inflation has come down from last year's peak above 9 percent, but economists warn the last bit of improvement to get to the Fed's target could be the most difficult to achieve.

With Fed officials no longer giving speeches ahead of their meeting next week on interest rates, "the data will do all of the talking this week," economists at Deutsche Bank said in a report.

Those economists say a report on Thursday about inflation at the wholesale level will be nearly as important as the data on inflation at the consumer level. High growth for wages in the health care industry could be pushing upward on inflation there, they say.

A separate report on Thursday will also show how much U.S. households spent at retailers last month. Strong spending there recently has helped the economy avoid a long-predicted recession. But it also could encourage companies to keep trying to raise prices, pushing upward on inflation.

Yields held relatively steady on Monday, with the 10-year Treasury yield up to 4.28 percent from 4.26 percent late Friday. The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more closely with expectations for the Fed, rose to 5.00 percent after drifting through the day, up slightly from 4.99 percent late Friday.

Most traders expect the Federal Reserve to leave rates where they are at its meeting next week, according to data from CME Group. But many are bracing for another possible hike by the end of this year, while paring expectations for cuts to rates next year.

On Wall Street, Charter Communications rose 3.2 percent after it announced a deal with The Walt Disney Co. to restore access to ESPN and other channels to its Spectrum video customers. Disney rose 1.2 percent.

Apple rose 0.7 percent ahead of a Tuesday event where it's expected to release its latest iPhone model. How Apple performs has great consequence for the market because it's the most valuable stock on Wall Street. That means its movements pack more weight on the S&P 500 and other indexes than any other stock.

Qualcomm rose 3.9 percent after it announced a deal to supply 5G equipment for Apple in its phone launches in 2024 through 2026.

Hostess Brands jumped 19.1 percent after J.M. Smucker said it will buy the maker of Twinkies and HoHos in a cash-and-stock deal valued at $5.6 billion, including $900 million of net debt. J.M. Smucker slumped 7 percent.

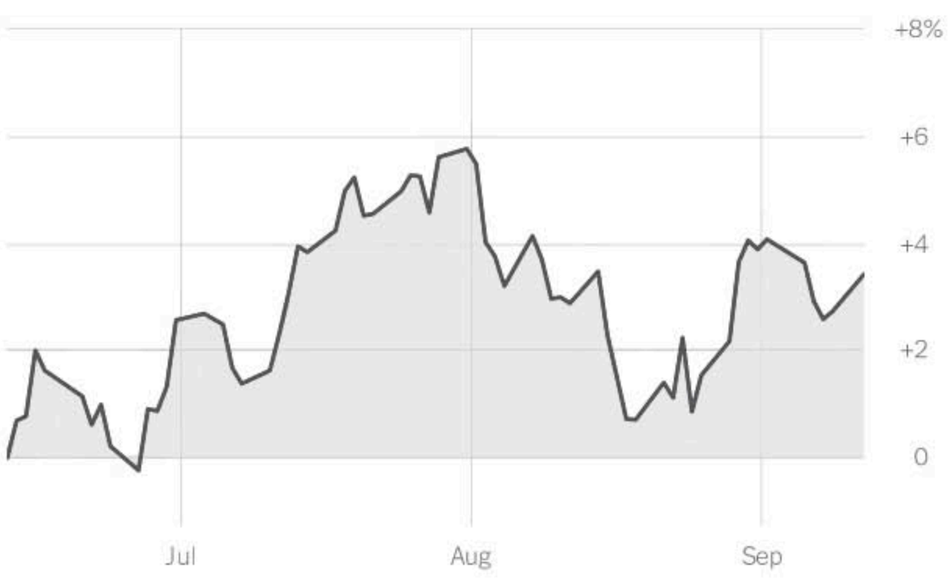
NEWSLETTER: DEALBOOK

DealBook helps you make sense of the day's most important business and policy headlines. Sign up for the newsletter at **nytimes.com/dealbook**

What Happened in Stock Markets Yesterday

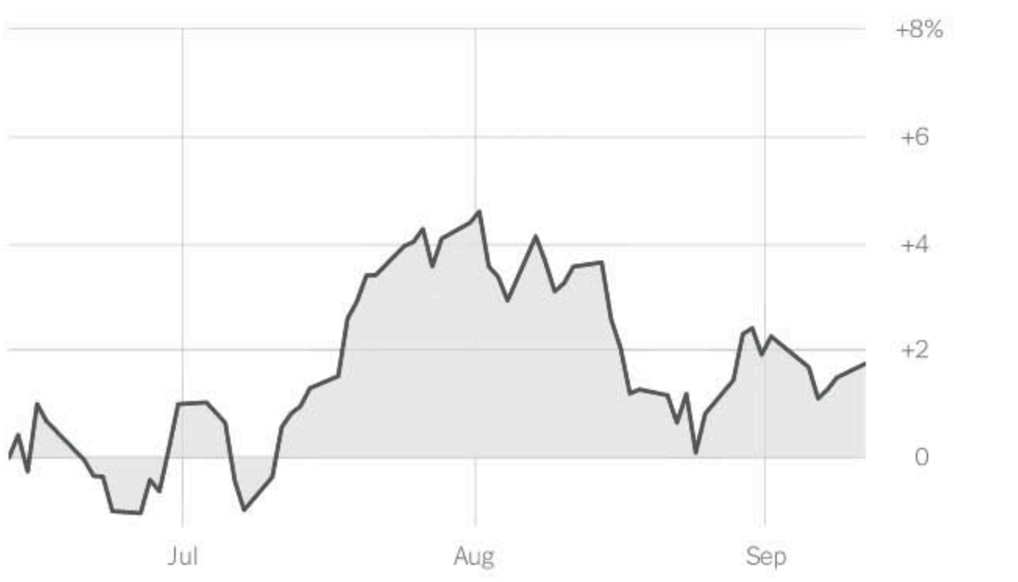
POWERED BY FACTSET

S&P 500 4,487.46 ↑+0.7%
3 month performance: **+3.4%**



Nasdaq Composite Index 13,917.89 ↑+1.1%
3 month performance: **+3.4%**

Dow Jones Industrials 34,663.72 ↑+0.3%
3 month performance: **+1.8%**



Best performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Tesla (TSLA)	$273.58	+10.1%
2. CVS Health (CVS)	$68.75	+4.4
3. Qualcomm (QCOM)	$110.28	+3.9
4. Kenvue (KVUE)	$22.07	+3.6
5. M and T Bank (MTB)	$126.16	+3.6
6. Amazon.com (AMZN)	$143.10	+3.5
7. Stryker Corp. (SYK)	$299.72	+3.5
8. Meta Platforms A (META)	$307.56	+3.2
9. Charter Communications (CHTR)	$435.84	+3.2
10. DexCom (DXCM)	$107.29	+2.8

Worst performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Raytheon Technologies (RTX)	$76.90	−7.9%
2. J.M. Smucker (SJM)	$131.66	−7.0
3. Newell Brands (NWL)	$9.34	−6.0
4. V.F. Corp (VFC)	$17.67	−6.0
5. MARATHON OIL (MRO)	$26.16	−4.2
6. Lincoln National (LNC)	$24.60	−4.2
7. Devon Energy (DVN)	$50.78	−3.6
8. ETSY (ETSY)	$64.82	−3.4
9. Gen Digital (GEN)	$19.31	−3.4
10. Kroger (KR)	$45.43	−3.2

Most active

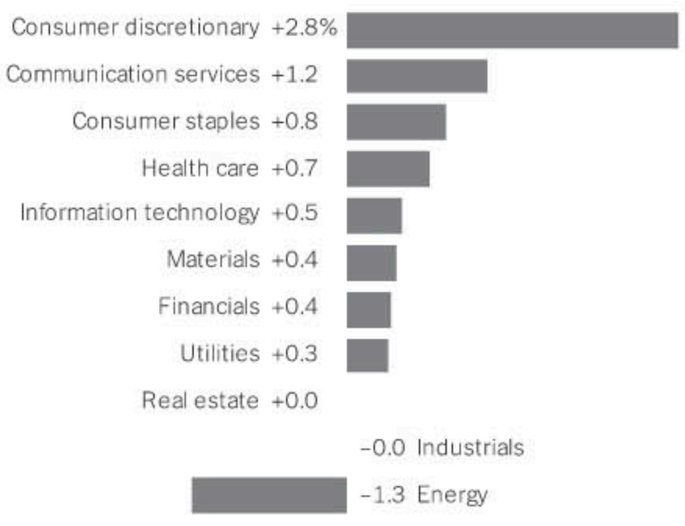
S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE	VOLUME IN MIL.
1. Tesla (TSLA)	$273.58	+10.1%	173
2. Apple (AAPL)	$179.36	+0.7	58
3. Amazon.com (AMZN)	$143.10	+3.5	56
4. Advanced Micro Devices (AMD)	$105.32	−0.7	50
5. NVIDIA (NVDA)	$451.78	−0.9	47
6. Kenvue (KVUE)	$22.07	+3.6	42
7. Warner Bros. Discovery 'A' (WBD)	$11.58	+2.3	37
8. Intel Corp (INTC)	$38.59	+1.5	35
9. Ford Motor (F)	$12.22	−0.7	34
10. Bank of America (BAC)	$28.48	+0.4	31

Long- and intermediate-term gov't bonds

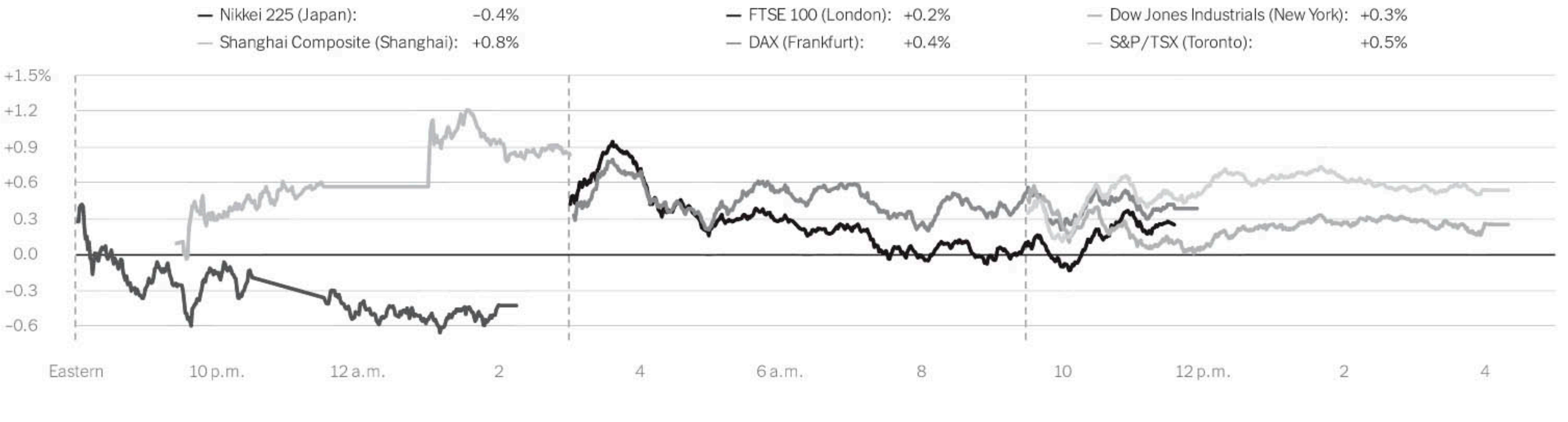
	TOTAL RETURN 1 YR	TOTAL RETURN 5 YRS	TOTAL ASSETS IN BIL.
1. Vanguard Total Bond Market Index Fund Institutional Plus Shares (VBMPX)	−1.0%	+0.6%	297.1
2. Vanguard Total Bond Market II Index Fund Investor Shares (VTBIX)	−1.2	+0.4	255.0
3. American Funds The Bond Fund of America Class R-6 (RBFGX)	−1.6	+1.4	75.9
4. American Funds The Bond Fund of America Class 529-F-3 (FBOFX)	−1.7	+1.2	75.8
5. Strategic Advisers Fidelity Core Income Fund (FIWGX)	−0.7	0.0	66.8
6. Dodge & Cox Income Fund Class X (DOXIX)	+1.3	+1.8	65.8
7. Metropolitan West Total Return Bond Fund Plan Class (MWTSX)	−1.6	+0.6	61.3
8. Fidelity U.S. Bond Index Fund (FXNAX)	−1.2	+0.5	59.9
9. PIMCO Total Return Fund I-3 (PTTNX)	−0.9	+0.5	53.9
10. Strategic Advisers Core Income Fund (FPCIX)	−0.9	+0.9	49.2

Source: Morningstar

Sector performance
S&P 500 SECTORS

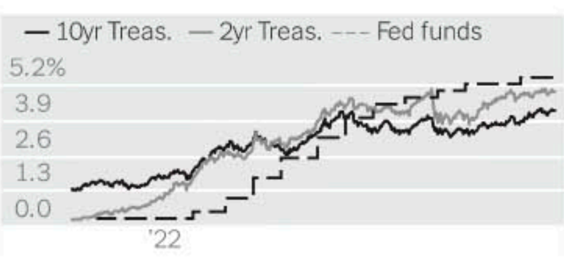


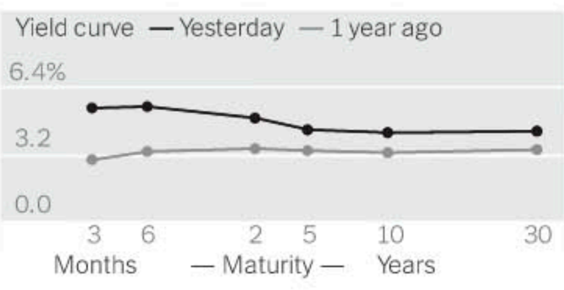
How stock markets fared yesterday in Asia ... **... in Europe** **... and North America**



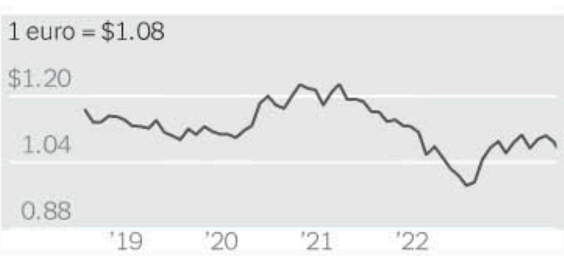
What Is Happening in Other Markets and the Economy

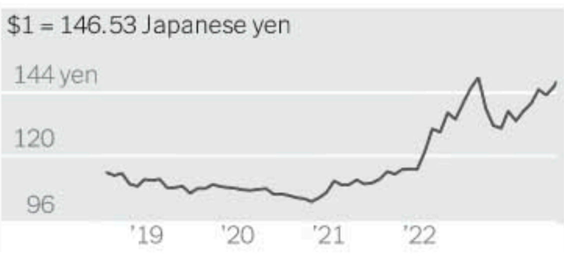
Bonds



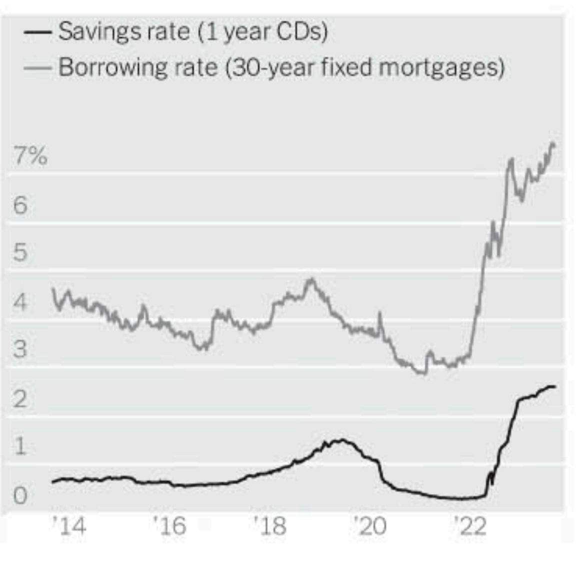


Currencies

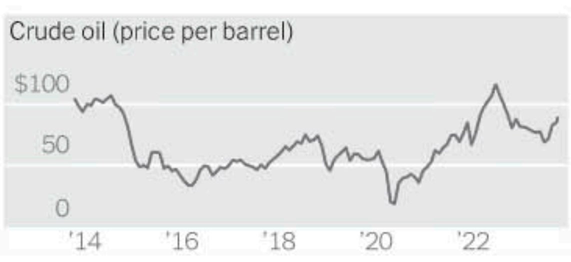


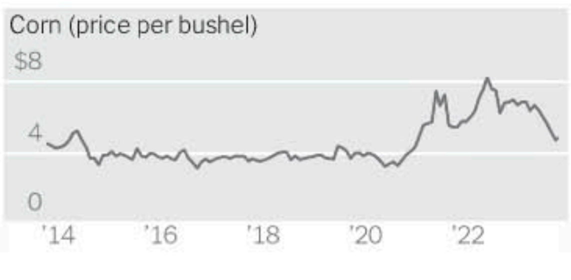


Consumer rates

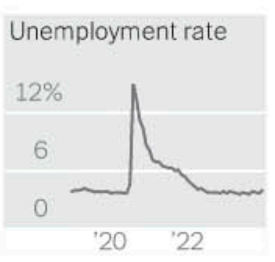


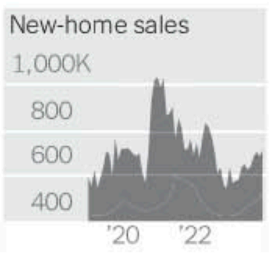
Commodities

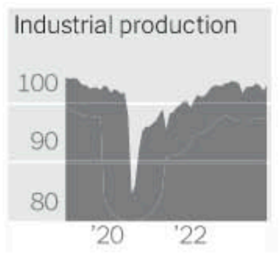




Economy







AUTOMOTIVE | REGULATION

BMW Plans to Build Electric Minis in Britain

By STANLEY REED

BMW said on Monday that it would invest 600 million pounds, or about $750 million, to build electric versions of its popular Mini car models in Britain.

The German manufacturer's move allays fears that the combination of Brexit and the shift to electric cars would pose a dire threat to automobile manufacturing in Britain, but questions over the sector's long-term future remain.

BMW's announcement is the third major piece of good news for Britain's beleaguered car industry in recent months. Tata Group, the owner of Jaguar Land Rover, said in July that it would spend £4 billion to build a battery plant in western England.

And last week, Stellantis, the leading maker of commercial vans in Britain, began producing electric-powered vans at its plant near Liverpool, after a £100 million investment.

DAMIAN DOVARGANES/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The British government used the promise of subsidies to clinch BMW's investment, as it did to land Tata's commitment to build the battery plant. BMW said its investment was "supported" by Britain's government, but neither party provided details.

BMW said it would build two electric models at its factory in Oxford: a three-door Mini Cooper sedan and a small sport utility vehicle called the Mini Aceman.

There had been worries that BMW might shift all electric Mini production to China, but the move to continue producing the vehicles in Britain was not necessarily a surprise. With the future of the global car industry clouded by uncertainty over how the shift to electric vehicles will play out, analysts say it was logical to make what is a relatively modest investment by auto standards to keep making the cars in Britain for the next few years.

"To keep that plant running is a fairly sensible option," said Peter Wells, an auto industry specialist at Cardiff University in Wales.

After all, the Mini is a brand closely associated with Britain, where it originated in the middle of the last century. That heritage is likely to help sales. Almost 46,000 Minis sold in Britain in 2022.

ANDREW BOYERS/REUTERS

Kemi Badenoch, left, Britain's business and trade secretary, called BMW's move to build Minis in Oxford "a big vote of confidence."

BMW has already shifted some production of electric Minis to China. It now says the Oxford plant will move completely to making electric vehicles by 2030.

Shutting down the 110-year-old Oxford factory, where an electric Mini is already being built alongside conventional models, and paying severance costs, would probably have been expensive. It also might have proved unpopular with potential customers.

"Mini has always been aware of its history," Stefanie Wurst, the head of the brand for Mini, said in a statement.

Kemi Badenoch, Britain's business and trade secretary, called BMW's move "a big vote of confidence."

BMW says it employs about 4,000 people at the Oxford factory and at a site that makes components in Swindon, England. Last year, 186,000 Minis were made in Britain, third in overall numbers of cars produced, after Nissan and Jaguar Land Rover.

BMW said that it would begin exporting the two new electric Mini models from China in 2024, as part of a joint venture it has with Great Wall Motor. Production of those models would not begin in Britain until 2026.

While the British car industry seems to have a stronger pulse than some analysts expected, recent investments largely represent moves by brands like Jaguar, Land Rover and Mini, which have strong associations with Britain. So far, Britain does not seem to be attracting investment from the likes of Tesla or Chinese vehicle makers.

The number of cars made each year in Britain roughly halved between 2015 and 2022. But for the first seven months of 2023, British car production was up 14 percent over the same period a year earlier.

U.S. Judge Blocks Efforts To Check Banks for Bias

By EMILY FLITTER

A federal judge in Texas ruled that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is overstepping its bounds in its attempts to check whether banks and other financial firms are discriminating against Black Americans and other minorities.

The case was brought last year by big trade organizations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the American Bankers Association. On Friday, the judge, J. Campbell Barker, wrote in his ruling that the consumer regulator was "exceeding statutory authority" in its attempt to use a law that bars financial institutions from engaging in "unfair, deceptive or abusive acts or practices" to check for instances of discrimination during routine examinations of the firms.

State laws offer protections from discrimination, and the regulator's activities would get in the way of those, wrote the judge, who was appointed by President Donald J. Trump. He also said that the law the agency wanted to apply in its new checks for discrimination, passed after the 2008 financial crisis, did not specify discrimination. Therefore, the phenomenon was outside its scope.

In fact, not every state has its own anti-discrimination laws. Georgia, for instance, does not broadly prohibit private employers from discriminating against employees nor private businesses from discriminating against customers.

"The agency instead must point to clear congressional authorization for the power it claims," the judge wrote, citing a Supreme Court ruling that last year limited the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to regulate emissions under the Clean Air Act.

Sam Gilford, a C.F.P.B. spokesman, said in an email that the agency was considering appealing.

"A longstanding and straightforward federal law prohibits unfair acts and practices, stating that financial firms cannot subject consumers to substantial and unavoidable harm, Mr. Gilford said. "In our view, it is common sense that discrimination can meet that standard." He added that the agency would abide by the ruling but would continue to use "any available tool" to fight discrimination in the financial system.

Banks have long tried to limit the ways regulators can penalize them. While they say they aim to treat all customers equally, they also say that some customers may be at a disadvantage because of systemic inequality in American society for which they are not responsible.

In 2020, after George Floyd's murder set off widespread protests against police brutality and the broadly unjust treatment of Black Americans, top executives from the major banks, including Wells Fargo and Bank of America, asked the Trump administration to hold off on their request to scrap anti-discrimination protections put in place under the Obama administration. Such a regulatory break would have seemed too out of step with public sentiment at the time, but more than three years later, the banks are getting relief on a scale similar to what they had chosen to forgo.

The trade groups behind the lawsuit had originally stressed that their main impetus for suing the C.F.P.B. was a question of process. The regulator had added "discrimination" to a manual provided to financial firms explaining how to prepare for the agency's periodic checks on their operations. Officials should have given them more warning, the groups argued, and a chance to submit public comments on the matter before finalizing the change.

The groups also claimed it wasn't clear that the agency had any authority to test them for discriminatory practices. Judge Barker's decision focused on that broader issue.

Rob Nichols, the president of the American Bankers Association, said in an emailed statement that his organization was "pleased" with the outcome of the case, adding that the ruling found that the C.F.P.B. did not have "open-ended and novel power to examine banks for alleged discriminatory conduct."

SUMMARY NOTICE OF PROPOSED CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AND COURT-APPROVAL HEARING

In re: Aqueous Film-Forming Foams Products Liability Litigation, MDL No. 2:18-mn-02873
This Document relates to: City of Camden, et al., v. 3M Company, No. 2:23-cv-03147-RMG

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA, CHARLESTON DIVISION

TO THE SETTLEMENT CLASS: All Active Public Water Systems in the United States of America that have one or more Impacted Water Sources as of June 22, 2023; and all Active Public Water Systems that do not have one or more Impacted Water Sources as of June 22, 2023 and
(i) are required to test for certain PFAS under U.S. EPA's UCMR-5, or
(ii) serve more than 3,300 people, according to U.S. EPA's SDWIS data system.

All capitalized terms not otherwise defined herein shall have the meanings set forth in the Settlement Agreement, available for review at **www.PFASWaterSettlement.com.**

Active Public Water System means a Public Water System whose activity-status field in SDWIS states that the system is "Active."

Impacted Water Source means a Water Source that has a Qualifying Test Result showing a Measurable Concentration of PFAS.

As used above, **Public Water System** means a system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen (15) service connections or regularly serves an average of at least twenty-five (25) individuals daily at least sixty (60) days out of the year, consistent with the use of that term in the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300f(4)(A), and 40 C.F.R. Part 141.

Public Water System includes (i) any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of such system and used primarily in connection with such system, and (ii) any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under such control which are used primarily in connection with such system. Solely for purposes of the Settlement Agreement, the term "Public Water System" refers to a Community Water System of any size or a Non-Transient Non-Community Water System that serves more than 3,300 people, according to SDWIS; or any Person (but not any financing or lending institution) that has legal authority or responsibility (by statute, regulation, other law, or contract) to fund or incur financial obligations for the design, engineering, installation, operation, or maintenance of any facility or equipment that treats, filters, remediates, or manages water that has entered or may enter Drinking Water or any Public Water System; but does not refer to a Non-Transient Non-Community Water System that serves 3,300 or fewer people, according to SDWIS, or to a Transient Non-Community Water System of any size. It is the intention of the Settlement Agreement that the definition of "Public Water System" be as broad, expansive, and inclusive as possible.

What Is the Purpose of this Notice? The purpose of this Notice is (i) to advise you of a proposed settlement of certain Claims against 3M Company ("3M" or "Defendant") in the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina (the "Court"); (ii) to summarize your rights in connection with the Settlement; and (iii) to inform you of a Court hearing to consider whether to grant final approval of the Settlement (the "Final Fairness Hearing"), to be held on February 2, 2024. at 10:00 a.m. EST in Charleston Courtroom #1, J. Waties Waring Judicial Center, before the Honorable Richard M. Gergel, United States District Judge of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, located at 85 Broad Street, Charleston, South Carolina 29401.

What Are the Key Terms of the Proposed Settlement? 3M has agreed to pay an amount not less than $10,500,000,000 and not more than $12,500,000,000, inclusive (the "Settlement Amount"), subject to final approval of the Settlement by the Court and certain other conditions specified in the Settlement Agreement. 3M shall additionally pay up to $5,000,000 to cover costs incurred by the Notice Administrator in the course of executing the Notice Plan. Together, these payments constitute the "Settlement Funds." In no event shall 3M be required under the Settlement Agreement to pay any amounts above the Settlement Funds. Any fees, costs, or expenses payable under the Settlement Agreement shall be paid out of, and shall not be in addition to, the Settlement Funds. Each Settlement Class Member that has not excluded itself from the Class will be eligible to receive a settlement check(s) from the Claims Administrator based on the Allocation Procedures developed by Class Counsel, which are subject to final approval by the Court as fair and reasonable and whose administration is under the oversight of the Special Master.

What Are My Options?

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE SETTLEMENT. You must file a Claims Form to be eligible to receive a payment under the Settlement. You can submit your Claims Form online at **www.PFASWaterSettlement.com,** or you can download, complete, and mail your Claims Form to the Claims Administrator at AFFF Public Water System Claims, P.O. Box 4466, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821. The deadline for a Phase One Settlement Class Member to submit a Phase One Public Water System Settlement Claims Form is 60 days following the Effective Date, and the deadline for a Phase Two Settlement Class Member to submit a Phase Two Action Fund Claims Form is June 30, 2026.

Regardless of whether you file a Claims Form or receive any distribution under the Settlement, unless you timely opt out as described below, you will be bound by the Settlement and any judgment or other final disposition related to the Settlement, including the Release set forth in the Settlement Agreement, and will be precluded from pursuing claims against 3M separately if those Claims are within the scope of the Release.

YOU CAN OPT OUT OF THE SETTLEMENT. If you do not wish to be a Settlement Class Member and do not want to participate in the Settlement and receive a settlement check, you may exclude yourself from the Class by completing and mailing a notice of intention to opt out. Any Person within the Settlement Class that wishes to opt out of the Settlement Class and Settlement must serve a written and signed statement entitled "Request for Exclusion" on the Notice Administrator, the Special Master, the Claims Administrator, 3M's Counsel, and Class Counsel no later than **December 11, 2023.**

YOU CAN OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT. Any Settlement Class Member that has not successfully excluded itself ("opted out") may object to the Settlement. Any Settlement Class Member that wishes to object to the Settlement or to an award of fees or expenses to Class Counsel must file a written and signed statement designated "Objection" with the Clerk of the Court and provide service on 3M's Counsel and Class Counsel no later than **November 11, 2023.**

VISIT WWW.PFASWATERSETTLEMENT.COM FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS

The Court's Final Fairness Hearing. The Court will hold the Final Fairness Hearing in Charleston Courtroom #1, J. Waties Waring Judicial Center of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, located at 85 Broad Street, Charleston, South Carolina 29401, on **February 2, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. EST.** At that time, the Court will determine, among other things, (i) whether the Settlement should be granted final approval as fair, reasonable, and adequate, (ii) whether the Litigation should be dismissed with prejudice pursuant to the terms of the Settlement Agreement, (iii) whether the Settlement Class should be conclusively certified, (iv) whether Settlement Class Members should be bound by the Release set forth in the Settlement Agreement, (v) the amount of attorneys' fees and costs to be awarded to Class Counsel, if any, and (vi) the amount of the award to be made to the Class Representatives for their services, if any. The Final Fairness Hearing may be postponed, adjourned, or continued by Order of the Court without further notice to the Class.

How Do I Get More Information? Please visit **www.PFASWaterSettlement.com** or call toll free **1-855-714-4341.** You may also contact Class Counsel or the Notice Administrator for more information:

Class Counsel	Class Counsel	Class Counsel
Scott Summy **Baron & Budd, P.C.** 3102 Oak Lawn Ave., Ste. 1100 Dallas, TX 75219 Email: ssummy@baronbudd.com	Michael A. London **Douglas & London** 59 Maiden Lane, 6th Fl. New York, NY 10038 Email: mlondon@douglasandlondon.com	Joseph F. Rice **Motley Rice LLC** 28 Bridgeside Blvd. Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
Paul J. Napoli **Napoli Shkolnik** 1302 Avenida Ponce de Leon San Juan, PR 00907 Email: pnapoli@NSPRlaw.com	Elizabeth A. Fegan **Fegan Scott LLC** 150 S. Wacker Drive, 24th Floor Chicago, IL 60606 beth@feganscott.com	

Notice Administrator	Class Counsel
In re: Aqueous Film-Forming Foams Products Liability Litigation c/o 3M Notice Administrator 1650 Arch Street, Suite 2210 Philadelphia, PA 19103 Email: PFASSettlement@AngeionGroup.com	AFFF Public Water System Claims PO Box 4466 Baton Rouge, LA 70821 Email: Info@pfaswatersettlement.com

TECHNOLOGY | INTERNATIONAL

KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

IPhone 14s on display at an Apple store in New York City. Apple was scheduled to unveil the 17th iteration of its flagship product, the iPhone 15, on Tuesday. The company has benefited from the stumbles of rivals Samsung and Huawei.

How the iPhone Defied the Usual Rules and Came to Dominate

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE
iPhone has suffered only modest declines because it's been winning new customers. It has done so despite being the industry's priciest device.

Apple has overcome price sensitivity by creating a business that is reminiscent of U.S. car sales. Like a car, iPhones last for years and can be resold to offset the purchase of a new one. Wireless providers, much like auto dealers, offer discounts and monthly payment plans that make it more affordable to buy the latest model. And customers, like brand-loyal car buyers, are more likely to buy another iPhone than switch to Google's Android operating system.

Apple has also been lucky. Two of its biggest challengers, Samsung and Huawei, have stumbled in recent years. Samsung faltered in 2016 when the batteries in its flagship smartphone spontaneously combusted. Huawei, which was popular in China, floundered in 2020 after the Trump administration blocked it from buying U.S. technology.

The iPhone has avoided wobbles with a reliable blueprint: Apple annually updates the iPhone's spare but sleek design and reliable software, and brings it to the masses with an operations machine that assembles 200 million flawless iPhones a year with military precision.

In the United States, the iPhone's popularity is expected to widen in the years ahead. Nearly 90 percent of teenagers own an iPhone, according to Piper Sandler, an investment bank.

For young people, iPhones equal inclusion. Many choose it over Android because Apple's messaging service, iMessage, will turn the color of messages from its default blue to green if a non-iPhone user is in a messaging group. The stigma associated with having green text messages is so pronounced that when it came time for Dave Storrs's 14-year-old son to get his first smartphone, the teenager told his father that he wanted an iPhone or no phone at all.

"It's a status thing," said Mr. Storrs, an Army retiree who lives in El Paso. "They don't want to be treated differently."

Mr. Storrs, who is 49, has been subjected to the same pressure. For more than a decade, he took pride in being what he called an "Android renegade." He owned a series of LG and Motorola phones, even as his son and other family members pressed him to buy an iPhone. He gave in this year after his family gave him a $99 pair of Apple's wireless AirPod earbuds.

Each time he wanted to use the AirPods on his Android phone, he had to manually sync them. The laborious process inspired him to buy an iPhone 13, which connects the AirPods instantaneously. After years of using a free Android phone, he now pays $11 a month for the iPhone. But he says that he'll never go back to Android because he likes that he can wear AirPods and take phone calls while walking his Catahoula leopard dog, Teddy.

"It's just convenient," he said.

New buyers like Mr. Storrs illustrate how Apple is gaining customers. The gap between the two major operating systems is tilted in Apple's favor. About 94 percent of iPhone customers are likely to buy another iPhone, while 91 percent of Android customers are likely to buy another Android, according to Consumer Intelligence Research Partners, a technology research firm.

The migration from Android to Apple has accelerated as promotional discounts, financing plans and trade-in offers make higher iPhone prices less of a barrier. Wireless carriers sweetened their offers as they scrambled to gain or keep customers after T-Mobile merged with Sprint in 2020. When the combined company, the new T-Mobile, offered the iPhone 12 free with a 30-month contract, AT&T countered with a similar deal, said Cliff Maldonado of BayStreet Research, a smartphone research firm. It made switching painless.

Around the same time, Apple and wireless carriers began more aggressively promoting monthly payment plans. The plans have reduced the cost of a new iPhone to less than $40 a month from the $800 to $1,200 that customers had to pay upfront. The prices are lower for people who trade in used devices. The old iPhones, which could fetch up to $640, have been auctioned to buyers in Asia, who resell them at a markup, Mr. Maldonado said.

"The phone market is like the housing market," he said. "You get equity, and pay over time."

In China, the second-most important country to Apple's business, the iPhone has become the default choice for people who want a premium smartphone. Samsung was squeezed out of the market several years ago, and Huawei has been unable to make a phone with the latest wireless technology. The lack of competition has helped to make the iPhone the country's best-selling smartphone in recent quarters.

But new challenges threaten Apple's lead. Last month, Huawei unveiled a new premium smartphone, the Mate 60 Pro, its first to feature chips capable of running on 5G cellular networks. Beijing also directed employees of national government agencies not to use iPhones for work. Instead, they have been encouraged to use domestic smartphone brands, raising the possibility that nationalist momentum undercuts future iPhone sales. The news was first reported by The Wall Street Journal.

Apple didn't respond to requests for comment.

Apple may be able to offset a dip in China with growth in India. The company now claims 5 percent of sales in the world's fastest-growing smartphone nation, up from 1 percent in 2019. Counterpoint Research predicts that Apple could double its share to 10 percent next year.

The iPhone's gains in India have been years in the making. In 2017, Apple began working with government officials to start manufacturing iPhones locally, a move that has improved affordability by avoiding import tariffs. It has also opened stores in New Delhi and Mumbai.

The new flagship iPhones that Apple is set to unveil this week will feature speedier processors, more sophisticated cameras and titanium rather than stainless steel cases, according to supply chain analysts. The changes are expected to come with a $100 to $200 price increase, bringing the cost of an iPhone Pro to $1,100 and the Pro Max to $1,200.

But analysts predict that iPhone loyalists will shrug off higher prices. The increases would be less than $5 a month for people on monthly plans and even less for those who trade in old iPhones.

"The economy is doing pretty well, and everything costs more," said Michael Levin, a co-founder of Consumer Intelligence Research Partners. "People are desensitized to increases right now."

Beijing Is Said to Repress Use of iPhones

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE
nese market has pushed the company's stock lower, and Apple's most popular product has gotten snared in the persistent China-U.S. tensions over technology.

China's censors, usually assiduous about controlling the flow of information on the internet, appear to have done little or nothing to stop the claims of restrictions, first reported in The Wall Street Journal.

Hu Xijin, the retired editor of a Communist Party-run tabloid and now a nationalistic commentator with 25 million followers, has written about them on his blog. "If this trend continues, the U.S. is likely to be the bigger loser," Mr. Hu wrote on Weibo, a popular Chinese social media site. In a written reply to questions, Mr. Hu said that China has been forced by American policies to show greater "vigilance" about security issues.

On Sunday, President Biden said during a news conference in Vietnam that China's plan to limit government use of "a Western cellphone" was evidence that "China is beginning to change some of the rules of the game in terms of trade and other issues."

Some local and provincial employees, who make up the bulk of government employees in China, have denied being told of any ban. They have been targeted in previous efforts to discourage the use of Apple devices, notably after Edward J. Snowden, an American government contractor, released information in 2013 revealing U.S. surveillance around the world.

The United States and China both have much to lose in a geopolitical fight over consumer electronics.

Apple products are more visible in China than products from Chinese brands like Huawei and Xiaomi are in the United States. But because Apple and many other consumer electronics manufacturers have moved much of their manufacturing to China, one of the largest categories of the American trade deficit with China is in smartphones.

The warnings come right after Huawei introduced a smartphone with high-quality cameras that is seen as an iPhone rival. The

The prospect of Apple losing ground in China has hurt its stock price.

Huawei phone, the Mate 60 Pro, is the target of a U.S. review into whether it uses computer chips that were made with American technologies that have been embargoed for sale to China. Huawei has presented the phone as a domestic effort.

Gina Raimondo, the United States commerce secretary, visited Beijing and Shanghai last month and told Chinese officials that the United States would not pull back recent controls it placed on certain high-tech exports to China.

Duncan Clark, a specialist in China's telecom sector and now the chairman of BDA China, an investment consulting firm, said he believed the restrictions were "an effort to raise the stakes and remind the U.S. of what it could lose" from continued geopolitical frictions.

Jean-Pierre Cabestan, a professor emeritus at Hong Kong Baptist University, had a similar assessment. "I think it's a tit-for-tat reaction," he said, to American efforts to discourage foreign governments from installing Huawei equipment in their telecom sectors, as well as moves by some U.S. states to restrict the use of TikTok, the social media app, by government employees.

The United States bans federal agencies from buying telecommunications equipment from Huawei and other Chinese manufacturers.

Mr. Cabestan said that the warnings in China appeared to be a security measure aimed at state employees, and not a broader effort to discourage sales in China of Apple devices.

Still, few American companies have more to lose than Apple from rising tensions between the world's superpowers. China is the world's largest smartphone market and the source of about a fifth of Apple's revenue. Apple doesn't break out how many iPhones it sells in China.

More broadly, Apple became the most valuable technology company by pioneering a business model built on China's manufacturing expertise. The country's giant work force inexpensively assembles the vast majority of iPhones sold around the world.

KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Biden said while visiting Hanoi, Vietnam, on Sunday that China was changing the rules by limiting use of "a Western cellphone."

On Tuesday in California, Apple will reveal its newest iPhone at a highly choreographed event that is an annual rite in Silicon Valley, and the company will then start stocking its stores around the world with the new model. Increasing official Chinese resistance to iPhones has the potential to curb this year's sales.

Apple, which didn't respond to requests for comment, has not said anything publicly about the recent reports.

The iPhone has long been a status symbol among Chinese entrepreneurs and popular among consumers. By contrast, government employees have made a point of showing off their Huawei phones in public settings.

Under pressure from the Chinese government, Apple has built an extensive data center in China, although it has said it continues to protect its customers' privacy all over the world.

Some people who work in China's central government said employees have been told to stop using iPhones. Others described a vaguer demand for officials to stop using foreign-brand phones and to use Chinese ones.

One message that circulated on WeChat, a ubiquitous Chinese social media service, cited a decision from a departmental leader that staff members were to be barred from using foreign-brand smartphones, laptops and other digital devices starting Sept. 7. The message said staff members were also prohibited from using these foreign-brand products for work in their own homes. Another message on WeChat said that staff members would be required to stop using iPhones by Oct. 1.

Discussion has appeared online for years about whether Chinese officials are barred from using iPhones, along with occasional denials of blanket bans. A Shanghai newspaper reported in 2014 that officials in that city were under pressure to abandon iPhones over security worries.

A researcher in a government-run research institute in Beijing, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the drive to discourage the use of iPhones appeared to ripple from what Chinese officials and party newspapers have described as a strategy of "substitution for domestic products" in key technologies, which has picked up pace since last year. In a speech to senior officials in February, Xi Jinping, China's leader, urged increased efforts to achieve self-sufficiency for China in scientific research and advanced technologies.

"We must go on the offensive for the national production of scientific and technological instruments and equipment, operating systems and basic software," Mr. Xi said.

In recent weeks, China's Minister of State Security has publicized cases that it said involved Chinese officials and other people in sensitive roles being recruited by U.S. intelligence agents. Earlier this year, Chinese government secrecy authorities warned about careless use of phones that could expose officials to hacking or leaking sensitive information.

Amy Chang Chien, Claire Fu and Li Yuan contributed reporting.

MEDIA | MARKETING | ACQUISITIONS

Charter Ends Stalemate With Disney

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

States, had been locked in a high-stakes struggle over the terms of their distribution agreement. The two sides couldn't reach a deal, and Disney's shows were pulled off Charter's cable service before Labor Day, when many Americans were expecting to tune into college football and the U.S. Open tennis tournament.

So-called carriage disputes like the impasse between Disney and Charter are fairly common, with TV distributors often balking at paying media companies ever-higher rates to show their movies and TV shows. The channels generally go dark for a few days and are restored after some last-minute deal making.

But Charter took its dispute with Disney further, calling an early-morning news conference before Labor Day weekend to declare that its fraught negotiation with Disney was a sign of worsening conditions for the cable bundle that millions of Americans pay for every month. It was a notable acknowledgment from a cable company that propelled much of the growth of pay TV.

The dispute boiled down to how Disney's movies and shows — those on traditional channels and the company's streaming services — could be offered to Charter's customers. Charter wanted to give Disney's streaming services, including Disney+, free to its subscribers, arguing that the company was moving much of its best programming away from cable. Disney balked at that, arguing that Charter was devaluing services that it was spending billions of dollars on.

Under the new terms, Disney has agreed to provide its streaming services to Charter's TV subscribers at a wholesale rate, giving Spectrum subscribers an additional incentive to stick with the cable bundle. Disney also agreed to narrow the bundle of channels it sells to Charter, cutting out networks like Freeform, Baby TV and Disney Junior.

The cable dispute began a media stock sell-off before the deal was announced.

The dispute stoked concerns across the media industry, with analysts raising alarms that the cable-TV bundle was in peril. At an investor conference held by Goldman Sachs last week in San Francisco, chief executives including Brian Roberts of Comcast and David Zaslav of Warner Bros. Discovery cited the blackout as a sign of the changing tides of the media business.

"It feels like this is a moment," Mr. Zaslav said at the conference. "It's not clear whether this is a moment that resolves very quickly and we're back to having an industry that's in secular decline, and it's anybody's guess of how long that takes."

The dispute led to a sell-off of media stocks, hurting the share price of companies including Warner Bros. Discovery, Disney and Paramount. Shares in those companies rebounded somewhat Monday, as investors processed news of the deal.

The resolution of the dispute could shape coming negotiations between Charter and other media companies. Millions of Americans abandon the cable-TV bundle every year, meaning that a dwindling number of subscribers are paying rising fees for movies and TV shows that are increasingly being moved to streaming. Despite those challenges, cable TV is still enormously profitable, giving media companies an incentive to keep the business limping along as long as possible.

JUTHARAT PINYODOONYACHET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

At the East Village restaurant Cathédrale, TikTok rolled out its new shopping feature as part of Fashion Week. The social media app is hoping TikTok Shop will add a major new revenue stream.

TikTok Popularizes Products. Can It Sell Them, Too?

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

to translate the app's power as a cultural trendsetter into another big new revenue stream. But it is a venture that other popular social platforms, including Instagram, have not succeeded with in the United States.

To make it a hit, TikTok said, it is actively driving videos with shopping buttons into users' feed. The company is also, for the time being, giving generous discounts and coupons to users who shop and forgoing commissions from many sellers. TikTok said that it had already signed up 200,000 sellers to TikTok Shop and that more than 100,000 creators could make videos and livestream with shopping buttons.

"We have a very aggressive plan to make a splash in the industry and make sure that people out there understand that TikTok is a place for shopping," Nico Le Bourgeois, one of two executives overseeing TikTok Shop in the United States, said in an interview last week. "We'll be very present for Black Friday and Cyber Monday through a combination of traffic, free shipping and deals." He also said TikTok Shop would run ads on the web and elsewhere.

On Monday, TikTok's Shop button led to a page in the app with a vast array of items. Some were bizarre, like a 27-cent palm-size foldable chair and a $5.52 ice crusher with a hand crank. But there was also a section for verified brands like Revolve, Benefit Cosmetics and Otterbox, and products like Air Jordan sneakers.

In main TikTok feeds, creators are increasingly pitching products in videos that bear an orange Shop icon and the label "eligible for commission." People can buy the products with Apple Pay, PayPal or a credit card.

The Shop button, which now appears to 40 percent of users on the main bar of the app's home screen, started rolling out in August and will reach all of TikTok's 150 million U.S. users by early October.

An executive overhaul last month led to questions about the direction of U.S. e-commerce at the company. The person who oversaw the efforts, Sandie Hawkins, left the company for personal reasons, according to an internal memo. Mr. Le Bourgeois, who joined TikTok from Amazon, and Marni Levine, a retail executive who was most recently at Meta, replaced her in the role. They report to Bob Kang, the global e-commerce chief of the Chinese company ByteDance, which owns TikTok.

KAYANA SZYMCZAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The company seems to have moved away from an initial focus on promoting shopping through livestreams, a huge industry in Asia that has not found the same resonance in North America, according to several marketers.

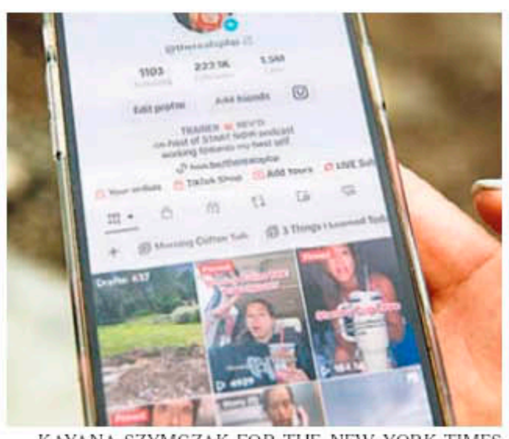
Craig Brommers, the chief marketing officer of the retailer American Eagle, said that when the chain tested live shopping events on TikTok in the past year, viewership was "well under what brands are experiencing in Asia-Pacific."

"The initial hypothesis was that live shopping would translate to North America — we haven't seen that success," Mr. Brommers said. He said his company was keen to learn about other tools from TikTok Shop under its new leadership, especially if it could make it "seamless" for Gen Z shoppers to, say, watch TikTok creators in American Eagle jeans, then buy them in a few clicks.

Mr. Le Bourgeois and Ms. Levine said videos with shopping buttons from brands and creators were now TikTok Shop's main sales driver, though they said live shopping was still a priority and growing in the United States.

Creators who want to sell products from TikTok's marketplace must choose from the assortment of items TikTok has available. Alyssa Pannozzi, an indoor cycling trainer and TikTok personality with more than 200,000 followers, said that when she looked at the sea of products, many came from "foreign shops that have a hodgepodge of items."

KAYANA SZYMCZAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



KAYANA SZYMCZAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Alyssa Pannozzi, an indoor cycling trainer with more than 200,000 TikTok followers, posted a video that surpassed two million views and led to over 600 sales of a tumbler.

The company has already run into accusations that it has enabled sales of shoddy or copyright-infringing products and has drawn comparisons to fast-growing Chinese shopping apps like Shein and Temu, which have flooded the market with cheap goods mailed straight from China.

TikTok's executives pushed back against such comparisons, saying it viewed itself more like Amazon or China's TMall and was using technology and manual moderation to enforce its policies, requiring "robust verification" for new sellers. The company said more than 90 percent of TikTok Shop's sellers were U.S.-based, and Mr. Le Bourgeois emphasized that a slew of major brands like Benefit, Olay, L'Oreal and e.l.f. had joined or were planning to join TikTok Shop.

Ms. Pannozzi, 37, said she was invited to join TikTok Shop a few months ago but largely ignored it until July, when she saw that her feed was flooded with QVC-style pitches and wondered if she could make money from those. She has tried to feature items from sellers with positive reviews that suit her followers — like hair elastics and water bottles — finding major success a few weeks ago with an advertorial video that passed more than two million views and led to over 600 sales of a Stanley-style tumbler. She said she expected to earn thousands of dollars in commissions and had joined an agency's invite-only program for TikTok Shop creators.

"Now, I'm getting a bunch of inquiries every morning when I wake up," she said. "TikTok to me now is completely different than it was a couple of months ago — just the whole vibe of it," she added.

Paul Tran and Lynda Truong, the married founders of the South Korean skin care company Love & Pebble, attended TikTok's event with advertisers last week. They said in an interview that joining TikTok Shop this summer was "life changing," and that TikTok's offers for shoppers were generous.

Mr. Tran said the average price for the brand's core product — a "beauty pops ice mask kit" for the face — was about $39. While it was often selling for $7, or even $11, less on TikTok because of the app's discounts, he said he was still earning the same profit as he would from the standard price. Mr. Tran said he was not sure when TikTok might start taking a commission.

Ms. Levine said that TikTok could not elaborate on its future commission model but that it was "focused on getting the first of all the sellers to add their inventory to the platform."

"The name of the game is to keep people on the platform as well, whether that's through shopping, engagement of videos, whether it's through dances," Ms. Levine added. "It's always about keeping people engaged and being a part of the community."

J.M. Smucker Buys Hostess and $900 Million Debt

By J. EDWARD MORENO

In a sugary union of major snack makers, J.M. Smucker, known for its jellies, Jif peanut butter and many other brands, agreed to acquire Hostess Brands, the maker of Twinkies, Ho Hos and Ding Dongs, in a deal worth $5.6 billion.

The takeover, announced on Monday, values Hostess at $34.25 per share, about 50 percent higher than its stock was trading before rumors emerged a few weeks ago. Smucker's stock fell 7 percent on Monday. The cash-and-stock deal, which includes Smucker's taking on Hostess's $900 million in debt, is expected to close by the end of April, the companies said.

Mark Smucker, the chief executive of J.M. Smucker and the great-great-grandson of Jerome Monroe Smucker, the company's founder, said the deal would add "an iconic sweet snacking platform" to the group's portfolio. In addition to snacks, Smucker's stable includes many coffee and pet food brands, like Folgers and Milk-Bone.

Analysts at JPMorgan Chase described the takeover as more of a win for Hostess than for Smucker, given the hefty price. They also raised questions about how the companies' brands would blend since Smucker does not own many shelf-stable snacks, as Hostess does.

"Some may argue that there are revenue synergies from marketing coffee and breakfast snacks together," the analysts wrote in a note after the deal was announced. "Maybe, but lots of foods and beverages are consumed at the same time; they don't always naturally benefit from being owned by the same producer."

Analysts questioned how the companies' brands would blend.

Smucker said it expected to cut $100 million worth of costs at the combined group within two years.

Hostess traces its roots to the early 20th century, when it was at the forefront of innovations like sliced bread. More recently, the company filed for bankruptcy twice, in 2004 and 2012. The company passed between various investment firms and went public in 2016 via a merger with a special purpose acquisition company.

Hostess and Smucker have recently been able to increase sales and profits by raising prices as fast as, or faster than, their costs, which were pushed up by supply-chain snarls early in the pandemic and higher energy prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Food prices have risen at a faster rate than overall inflation over the past year, squeezing shoppers' budgets. Last quarter, Hostess raised prices by 10 percent from a year earlier and Smucker by 8 percent.

KIM RAFF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Hostess makes Ho Hos, Ding Dongs and Twinkies — a favorite dessert of Mitt Romney, who had a table of Twinkies set at a meet-and-greet in 2018.

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Sports
The New York Times

PRO BASKETBALL

From Friend in a Violent Sport, A Message of Calm for Murray

MATTHEW STOCKMAN/GETTY IMAGES

BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JEFF BOTTARI/ZUFFA LLC, VIA GETTY IMAGES

The Nuggets star Jamal Murray, top, and the U.F.C. featherweight champion, Alexander Volkanovski, shared training sessions last August. Their friendship grew as Murray, recovering from a torn A.C.L., worried about his N.B.A. future.

JOHN LOCHER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

By TANIA GANGULI

It was a Sunday afternoon in early July, and Jamal Murray had been in Las Vegas for a few days — enough time for the city to wear out anyone.

"I'm a little hung over," he said, smiling in apology as he tried — unsuccessfully — to remember some details of the post-championship interactions he'd had with Denver Nuggets fans. Murray, the Nuggets' star point guard, was less than a month removed from helping the franchise win its first N.B.A. championship.

He had spent the previous night feting his friend Alexander Volkanovski, U.F.C.'s featherweight champion, after Volkanovski won U.F.C. 290 to remain undefeated in the 145-pound weight class. Murray had joined him for several hours before the fight and had been struck by how at ease Volkanovski was. The fighter had been happy to laugh and joke with Murray despite an important bout awaiting him later that night.

"This is like a championship belt for him, right?" Murray said. "He was just so loose about it. It kind of brought me back to, like, I don't have to take my routine as serious as long as I know how to flip a switch, turn it on and bring it when I need it."

The lesson could come in handy for Murray as he prepares for his next N.B.A. season, with training camps beginning in about a month. Last week, he went to Sydney, Australia, to attend U.F.C. 293, where Israel Adesanya lost his middleweight belt to Sean Strickland. Murray planned to spend some time training with Volkanovski while there.

Murray befriended Volkanovski during a visit to Australia last August. They shot a video together, with each one going through the other's training routines. Murray hit a heavy bag. Volkanovski shot some free throws.

There are superficial differences between the two — Murray is nearly a foot taller than the 5-foot-6 Volkanovski, and Volkanovski is eight years older — but in Murray, Volkanovski saw someone who shared the work ethic and discipline on which he prided himself. Volkanovski instantly took to Murray.

"I'm a Nuggets guy now purely because of our connection," Volkanovski said in late July, a few weeks after Murray joined him for U.F.C. 290.

Their friendship grew at a challenging time for Murray.

Murray had missed the 2021-22 N.B.A. season as he recovered from a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee. He had to teach himself how to walk again, and he spent days wondering about his basketball future.

Nuggets Coach Michael Malone later recalled that Murray, with tears in his eyes, had asked if the Nuggets were going to trade him because of his injury.

In fall 2022, Murray began playing N.B.A. basketball again.

Denver had the best record in the Western Conference for most of the season. As Murray grew more comfortable, he and Nikola Jokic, the team's star center, became a fearsome tandem. During the playoffs, they became the first teammates to have triple-doubles with at least 30 points in the same game.

"I'm still coming back, though," Murray said in July. "I didn't have a full off-season to recover. Or train on what I wanted to. My whole last summer was just working on my strength here."

He patted his knee.

"And that was it. I didn't get to work on my game."

He had thrown himself into his return, and he had also been gravely serious about his pregame routine, leaving no time for levity.

The Nuggets won the N.B.A. championship in June, beating the Miami Heat in five games. That final night, as Murray left the arena in Denver, he sat in the passenger seat of a black car and occasionally rolled down his window to greet anyone who wanted to say hello. At one stoplight around 1 a.m., a fan spotted Murray as she was crossing the street. She sprinted over to Murray and hugged him through the car window. Rather than recoil at contact from a stranger, Murray returned the hug, smiling.

Finally relaxing after a grueling recovery and an N.B.A. title.

"Everybody's just trying to be a part of the moment, which is really cool," Murray said.

About four weeks later, he joined Volkanovski for his own championship bout.

There, Murray saw a different style of preparation than the one he had employed during the season.

"I'll definitely have my moment throughout my car ride, 'There's no way that they're taking this belt away from me.' But I'm usually pretty chill," Volkanovski said. "I'm happy to have a little laugh."

Volkanovski said he wondered if the violent nature of mixed martial arts might have made Murray more interested in his relaxed demeanor before the fight.

"Probably he could look at that, I mean, like, 'This guy's about to go to war and he literally treats it as, like, you know, this is his job, he knows he'll be fine,' " Volkanovski said. " 'He's obviously confident in his preparation and all that.' "

Though Volkanovski appreciated hearing that Murray sought inspiration from his process, he respects Murray's process as well.

"Everyone has their own way of preparing for their — whatever they do," Volkanovski said. "And you can never knock it, because obviously he's playing some good basketball, so you don't want to change much."

In July, Murray stayed for Volkanovski's postfight media appearances and then celebrated afterward at a gathering that Shaquille O'Neal also attended. The summer, at least, afforded a chance to unwind.

BASEBALL

The Meticulously Viral Joey Votto

A Reds star long laser-focused on his game opens up on social media, but looks forward to fading away.

By ZACH BUCHANAN

ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES

On a July night in Milwaukee, Joey Votto got his revenge.

Votto, the first baseman for the Cincinnati Reds, had seen a clip weeks earlier of the broadcaster Chris Russo, known as Mad Dog, voicing doubt that he and Kansas City Royals pitcher Zack Greinke belonged in the Hall of Fame. Now, with the opportunity to confront Russo during an appearance on MLB Network's "High Heat," Votto was planning something special.

Standing in foul territory and wearing a headset, Votto looked into a dugout camera. When Russo's co-host, Alanna Rizzo, asked a question, Votto smiled and answered engagingly. When Russo took a turn, Votto managed just a few sullen syllables in response. Quickly, Russo caught on — "Funny! You're funny today" — spurring Votto into a minute-long rant befitting a pro wrestler.

With big hand gestures and a rising tone, Votto inveighed against Russo's supposed slight toward him and Greinke. "You're looking down on us, a couple *small*-market *Mid*west ballplayers, just because we're not big-city just like you!" Votto lectured. His eyes widened as he bellowed critiques of Russo's "Fifth Avenue ties" and "perfectly coifed, Broadway hair."

Finally, the climax. "Not everyone can be the next Roger Peckinpaugh!" Votto yelled, reaching into the dead-ball era for a good-not-great former Yankee. "You should be ashamed!"

The rant, which Votto and Jim Day, the sideline reporter on Reds broadcasts, had been rehearsing for weeks — including on the team plane, which confused more than a few Reds co-workers — went viral: One of baseball's funniest characters had delivered again.

Votto, 40, who did not embrace social media until March 2020, now routinely posts content to an

> **Joey Votto** @JoeyVotto
>
> A lot of people were not happy about my Beantown tweet. I understand, but I was just kidneying. St. Louis is one of my favaite cities and I navy want to get on their bad side. I am very soy.
>
> 2:15 p.m. • Jul 22, 2022

audience of more than 300,000 followers between Instagram and X, formerly known as Twitter. Like his ambush of Russo, Votto's posts are carefully conceived and executed.

Last winter, he posed in a garish designer outfit — puffy vest, furry jumpsuit, expensive sunglasses, all purchased for the occasion — before playing in a Toronto chess tournament. In June, just before he returned from shoulder surgery, he debuted a skit of himself at the wheel of a Cincinnati school bus as a student chastised him to get back on the field.

That Votto, who homered in his return from the injured list on Sunday, has approached social media with forethought and planning is unsurprising. He has long been known as one of the game's most meticulous players. What is new is his willingness to devote any energy to it at all. For years, he conducted his career like an ascetic, devoting himself solely to the task of swinging a bat.

"He was so focused on his craft as a baseball player," said Zack Cozart, a teammate in Cincinnati for seven seasons, "it was almost like he had no time for anything else."

Votto is as dedicated to his craft as he ever was, though persistent shoulder problems have hampered his production this year. But now, with his career in its final descent, Votto has loosened up.

Everything changed, Votto said, after the 2017 season.

It had been a terrific year. At 33, he had played in every game, led the majors in on-base percentage and finished second in voting for the National League's Most Valuable Player Award. But he was not happy. The Reds were rebuilding and many of his closest teammates — Cozart, Jay Bruce, Johnny Cueto — had been traded. He was less than halfway through a 10-year, $225 million contract extension — an expensive piece of furniture left behind because the movers could not get it out the door.

"I felt very isolated," Votto said. "Friends back home were having kids, and teammates were going elsewhere. I was just a little worn out of not feeling like I could be myself."

To expand his world beyond the 24 square feet of the batter's box — being himself had always required some effort — he hired a Spanish teacher, took up chess and learned jujitsu. "I'm not a man of any other talent other than what I do in the batter's box," Votto said. "There's no doubt about that." Those who have witnessed his comic timing or listened to him speak Spanish or French might disagree, but Votto views those things as outlets, not skills.

"All these things give me the feeling that I'm not just one thing," he said, "because I'm really just one thing."

That paradox — his steely-eyed dedication to baseball, and his surprising number of interests outside of it — made Votto something of a baseball man of mystery. He was courteous to new teammates but hardly gregarious.

Cozart recalled a sobering appraisal from Votto early in his M.L.B. days. "If you hit balls like that," Votto said after watching Cozart repeatedly hit the top of the batting cage, "you've got no chance to play in this league." It was a splash of ice water for Cozart — "That's Joey Votto telling me that I'm terrible," he thought — but he soon recognized it as Votto's way of helping him. Cozart now considers Votto one of his favorite teammates. In 2017, Cozart's last as a Red, Votto fulfilled a public promise by buying the shortstop a donkey when he was named an All-Star.

The donkey episode showcased Votto's personality, as did a 2014 hit he did for MLB Network dressed as a Mountie, a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. (Votto was born in Canada.) But the notion of Joey Votto, social media star, would have seemed ridiculous to most who knew him back then.

"There were times like, 'No, I'm not bothering him today,'" said Day, who has covered Votto for his entire career. "I could tell that he's not in the mood to talk."

Now when Votto is feeling playful, Day is among his favorite foils.

As he has gotten older, Votto has also gotten more comfortable serving as the punchline.

One day earlier this year, the Reds prospect Matt McLain stood in the clubhouse of the Class AAA Louisville Bats and began to badmouth the game of chess. Behind him, undetected, was Votto, who was with the club on a rehabilitation assignment. Votto might have objected and put the minor leaguer in his place, but instead he laughed and enlisted McLain in a gag.

He set up a secret camera to record a chess match between himself and infielder Alex McGarry. In the resulting video, the contest is in full swing when McLain walks by and defiantly slaps all the pieces onto the floor. McLain said McGarry was not in on the act and that his initial anger was real. But most people got the joke, which Votto ensured would be on himself.

McLain is now one of several young players powering a Reds team that is hoping to claim one of the N.L.'s three wild-card spots in the playoffs. They are a team with so much young talent that something that had once been so difficult to envision — a bright Reds future without Votto — is now easy to see.

Instead of being left behind, Votto is determined to fit in.

That involves learning the rhythms of a generation of players that is less snarky and more earnest than his was. The blunt, standoffish thing does not land.

"You can't be that stubborn old dude in the locker room and then all these young bucks are going to look at you like, 'This dude is a grumpy old guy,'" Cozart said. "He's trying to be hip again."

That potential of these Reds reinforces what draws Votto to the game. "I love the challenge, I love competing, I love feeling worthwhile, like I'm a helpful piece of the puzzle," he said. "That's why I still think there's something left."

There had been times he had doubted that. One day before sitting in the visiting dugout for an interview in Phoenix earlier this season, he had been dealt a difficult blow. His left shoulder, which had required surgery midway through last season and had cost him much of this one, had forced him back on the I.L. The timing was inauspicious. Votto is in the final guaranteed year of his contract — the Reds hold a $20 million option for next season, with a $7 million buyout — and with less than a month of games remaining, it seemed possible at the time that he has played his last one as a Red.

KATIE STRATMAN/USA TODAY SPORTS

Joey Votto, 40, a late adopter to social media, has more than 300,000 followers. One of his well-planned routines includes giving clues to where fans can find signed memorabilia.

In 51 games between the two I.L. stints this year, he had batted only .200 with a .303 on-base percentage. Cincinnati is brimming with young talent and might decide to move on.

This latest setback prompted thoughts of retirement, Votto admitted. "There have been times when I'm like: 'Should I be done? Should I beat everyone to the punch?'" he said. But a recent conversation with his mother brought clarity. He worked his way back onto the field and he hopes to be a lifelong Red.

If the Reds decide otherwise, he gets it. "I've loved every single second here," he said. "Truly. Even the cold times, it's been an honor." Whatever happens, Votto insists he is not done.

"This is the first time in my career I realize that I love what I do," he said.

After two decades as a professional, all of it spent intensely focused on baseball, Votto is just now starting to enjoy it.

In Cincinnati, Votto is an icon, a label he would not apply to himself, but one he has learned to embrace. Sharing more of himself — and signed memorabilia, which he hides around Cincinnati while dropping location clues on social media — is Votto's way of returning that love. "All I really want to do is give," he said. "I've taken so much."

But he is not an open book. Votto remains protective of his privacy, and though he discussed the 2008 death of his father on social media last year, he has little interest in unpacking for the public that or any other chapter of his personal life. He will share his personality — more comfortably than many ever would have predicted — but he also wistfully anticipates the day he will fade into anonymity.

"Truly I fantasize about this," he said. "I dream about playing my last game and basically shutting everything off — saying goodbye on social, saying goodbye to the media and just getting away. Like I'm done. I'm done with baseball, done with the public eye."

He is not there yet, but the day is coming. For now, he is content to be just another small-market, Midwest ballplayer. Enjoy him while you can.

> **Joey Votto** @JoeyVotto
>
> I didn't know I was hurt. Thought I just stunk.
>
> 10:02 p.m. • Aug 19, 2022

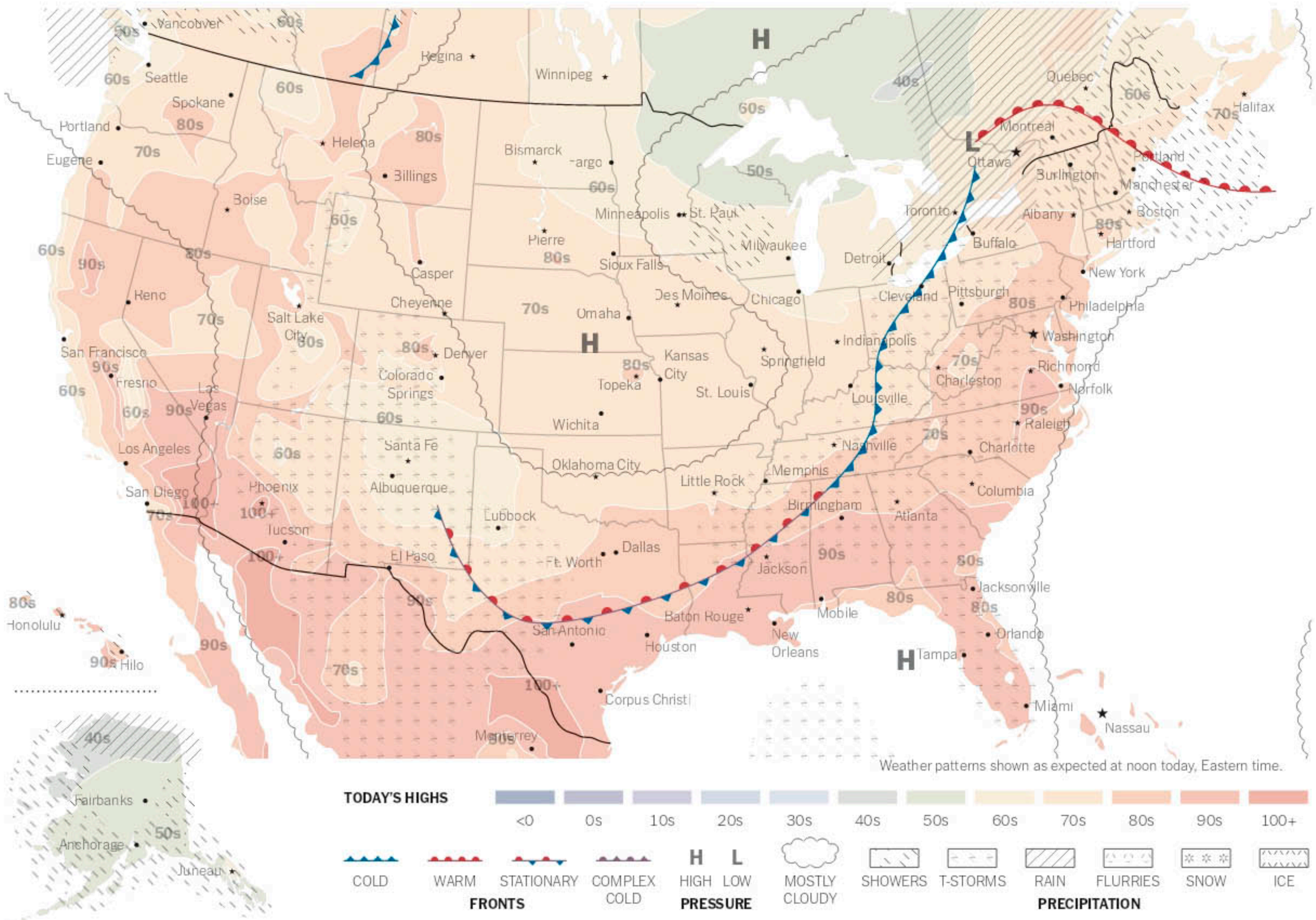
CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/ASSOCIATED PRESS

AARON DOSTER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Votto, top, with Elly De La Cruz, one of the promising young Reds whom Votto is trying to fit in with and remain with. Above, after hitting a home run in a June game.

Weather Report

Meteorology by **AccuWeather**



Metropolitan Forecast

TODAY ....Afternoon showers

High 82. The lingering effects from a front that is moving offshore will keep clouds, some sunshine and afternoon showers in the area. It will remain warm and humid, especially for September.

TONIGHT ....Showers, thunderstorms

Low 68. The front nearby will produce a couple of thunderstorms during the evening and a few showers late at night. The sky will remain mostly cloudy, and it will remain warm and humid.

TOMORROW ....Heavy thunderstorms

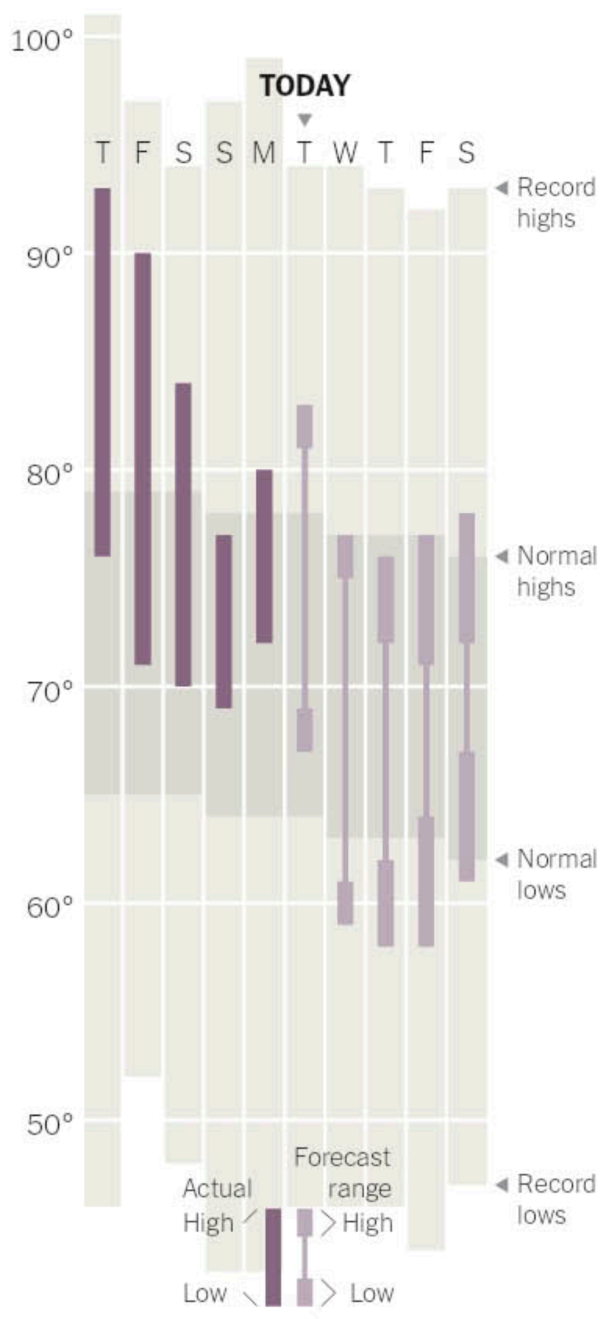
High 76. Another front will approach the area, bringing showers and a few thunderstorms during the afternoon. Thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and flash flooding.

THURSDAY ....Sunny, less humid

The front will clear out of the area and allow sunshine to return. Humidity will be much lower throughout the day. There will be a light breeze. High 76.

FRIDAY
SATURDAY ...Beach erosion from hurricane

High pressure will settle in on Friday, promoting a sunny sky and low humidity. High 74. Saturday will be breezy but dry with Hurricane Lee offshore. High 74.



Highlight: Rain and Thunderstorms in Northeast

Another round of wet weather is expected to hit the northeastern United States on Wednesday as a storm moves into southeastern Canada. The risk of showers and thunderstorms will extend south toward Virginia and North Carolina.

National Forecast

Warm, humid air will lead to drenching showers and gusty thunderstorms today from Louisiana to Georgia and north to Maine. There will be flash flooding and damaging wind gusts. A few lightning strikes will pose risks for people outdoors.

A front stretching from Lake Ontario to Texas will mark the leading edge of cooler, less humid air that will sprawl across the Midwest and the northern and central Plains.

Drenching showers and storms will break the heat from Texas to Utah and Arizona, where flash flooding will remain a concern.

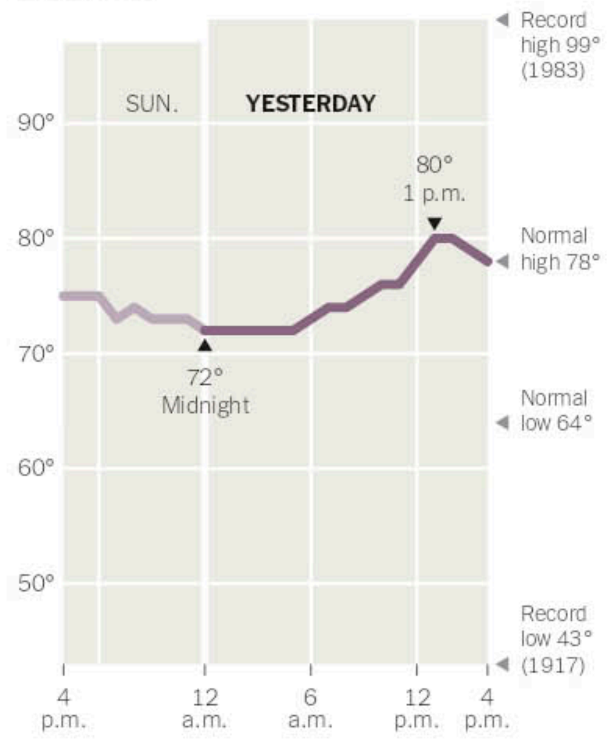
More spotty showers will dampen the northern Rockies and the Northwest.

Seas and surf will build along the southern Atlantic Coast as Hurricane Lee edges closer.

Metropolitan Almanac

In Central Park, for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday.

Temperature



Avg. daily departure from normal this month .... +5.5°

Avg. daily departure from normal this year .... +2.4°

Reservoir levels (New York City water supply)

Yesterday 92%
Est. normal 81%

Precipitation (in inches)

Yesterday 0.13
Record 2.90

For the last 30 days
Actual 7.00
Normal 4.21

For the last 365 days
Actual 50.53
Normal 49.52

LAST 30 DAYS

Air pressure

High .... 30.07 1 a.m.
Low .... 30.02 5 a.m.

Humidity

High .... 96% 1 a.m.
Low .... 75% noon

Cooling Degree Days

An index of fuel consumption that tracks how far the day's mean temperature rose above 65

Yesterday.. 11
So far this month.. 145
So far this season (since January 1) 1163
Normal to date for the season 1131

Trends

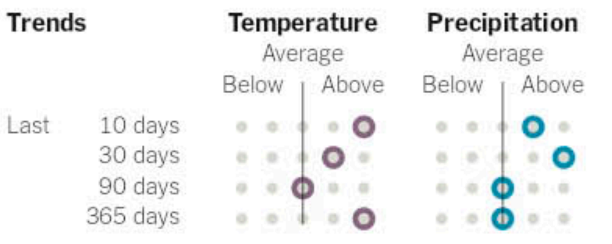


Chart shows how recent temperature and precipitation trends compare with those of the last 30 years.

Recreational Forecast

Sun, Moon and Planets

New	First Quarter	Full	Last Quarter
Sep. 14 9:38 p.m.	Sep. 22	Sep. 29 5:57 a.m.	Oct. 6

Sun	**RISE**	6:33 a.m.	**Moon**	**R**	3:54 a.m.
	SET	7:11 p.m.		**S**	6:31 p.m.
	NEXT R	6:34 a.m.		**R**	4:56 a.m.
Jupiter	**S**	11:23 a.m.	**Mars**	**R**	8:19 a.m.
	R	9:28 p.m.		**S**	8:00 p.m.
Saturn	**S**	5:13 a.m.	**Venus**	**R**	3:45 a.m.
	R	6:33 p.m.		**S**	5:11 p.m.

Boating

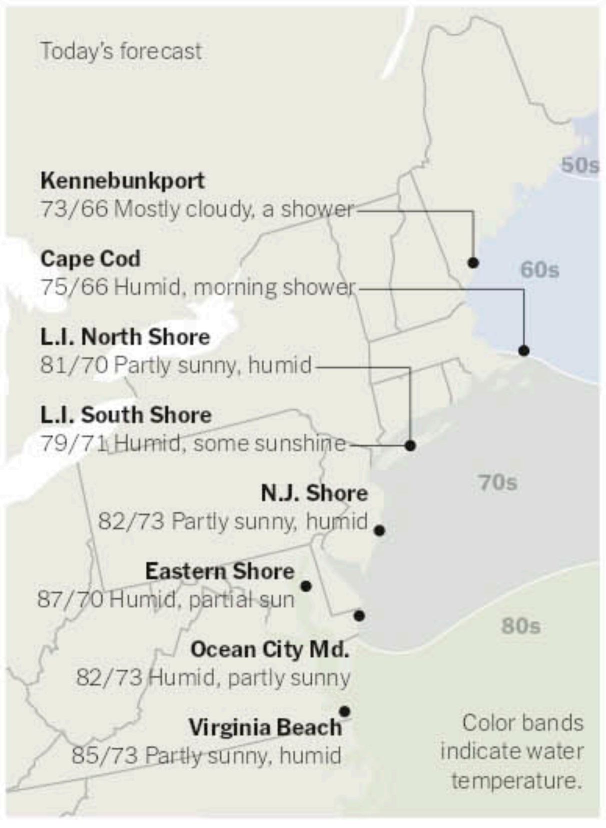
From Montauk Point to Sandy Hook, N.J., out to 20 nautical miles, including Long Island Sound and New York Harbor.

A light wind will shift south at 4-8 knots in the afternoon. Waves will be a foot or less on New York Harbor and Long Island Sound and 1-3 feet on the open ocean. Visibility may be reduced in a shower.

High Tides

Atlantic City	6:37 a.m.	6:49 p.m.
Barnegat Inlet	6:42 a.m.	6:53 p.m.
The Battery	7:29 a.m.	7:40 p.m.
Beach Haven	8:13 a.m.	8:24 p.m.
Bridgeport	10:25 a.m.	10:41 p.m.
City Island	10:58 a.m.	11:16 p.m.
Fire Island Lt.	7:41 a.m.	7:52 p.m.
Montauk Point	8:02 a.m.	8:27 p.m.
Northport	10:50 a.m.	11:02 p.m.
Port Washington	11:11 a.m.	11:24 p.m.
Sandy Hook	6:55 a.m.	7:06 p.m.
Shinnecock Inlet	6:33 a.m.	6:50 p.m.
Stamford	10:37 a.m.	10:50 p.m.
Tarrytown	9:18 a.m.	9:29 p.m.
Willets Point	10:57 a.m.	11:13 p.m.

Beach and Ocean Temperatures



A mostly cloudy sky and a few showers are expected across most New England beaches. Temperatures will be within a few degrees of average, and the air will be humid. Clouds and sunshine are expected from Long Island beaches down to Virginia Beach. Another humid day is expected there as well.

Cities

High/low temperatures for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday. Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.

C	Clouds	**S**	Sun
F	Fog	**Sn**	Snow
H	Haze	**SS**	Snow showers
I	Ice	**T**	Thunderstorms
PC	Partly cloudy	**Tr**	Trace
R	Rain	**W**	Windy
Sh	Showers	**–**	Not available

N.Y.C. region	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
New York City	80/ 72 0.13	82/ 68 PC	76/ 60 T
Bridgeport	78/ 70 0.15	78/ 69 PC	74/ 61 T
Caldwell	82/ 71 Tr	84/ 68 PC	75/ 59 T
Danbury	81/ 71 0.18	81/ 67 PC	74/ 54 T
Islip	80/ 71 0.04	78/ 70 PC	77/ 63 T
Newark	81/ 72 0.20	85/ 69 PC	76/ 60 T
Trenton	81/ 68 0.25	82/ 67 PC	76/ 57 T
White Plains	77/ 70 0.44	80/ 66 PC	73/ 56 T

United States	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Albany	75/ 62 0.02	81/ 67 PC	71/ 53 T
Albuquerque	81/ 57 0.08	70/ 58 T	73/ 58 T
Anchorage	56/ 44 0.06	56/ 45 Sh	57/ 43 C
Atlanta	90/ 71 0.07	88/ 70 T	83/ 68 T
Atlantic City	80/ 69 0.29	82/ 73 PC	76/ 62 T
Austin	98/ 72 0	96/ 73 C	94/ 71 PC
Baltimore	85/ 65 0.05	87/ 70 T	79/ 61 T
Baton Rouge	94/ 72 0	94/ 73 PC	90/ 71 PC
Birmingham	91/ 69 0	90/ 71 PC	85/ 68 C
Boise	92/ 60 0	87/ 57 S	82/ 55 S
Boston	72/ 67 0.59	74/ 67 C	75/ 63 T
Buffalo	76/ 60 0.01	71/ 56 T	64/ 52 C
Burlington	69/ 60 0	78/ 66 C	72/ 56 T
Casper	72/ 41 Tr	80/ 46 S	81/ 49 C
Charlotte	87/ 67 0	88/ 67 T	82/ 62 T
Chattanooga	88/ 69 0	86/ 69 T	84/ 64 C
Chicago	66/ 57 0.59	69/ 54 PC	66/ 51 Sh
Cincinnati	83/ 63 0	73/ 55 Sh	71/ 50 C
Cleveland	74/ 62 0	68/ 58 Sh	62/ 52 C
Colorado Springs	62/ 49 0.59	66/ 48 C	71/ 51 T
Columbus	80/ 62 0	70/ 55 Sh	68/ 50 C
Concord, N.H.	75/ 64 0.42	74/ 64 Sh	73/ 53 T
Dallas-Ft. Worth	89/ 69 0.02	84/ 69 C	82/ 69 T
Denver	67/ 49 0.06	76/ 52 C	77/ 51 T
Des Moines	72/ 51 0.02	75/ 50 PC	75/ 51 S
Detroit	74/ 62 Tr	68/ 53 Sh	63/ 48 PC
El Paso	101/ 69 0	87/ 66 T	90/ 67 T
Fargo	67/ 45 0.42	67/ 44 S	73/ 57 PC
Hartford	80/ 66 0.67	81/ 66 PC	73/ 56 T
Honolulu	93/ 78 0.01	92/ 79 PC	92/ 79 Sh
Houston	97/ 74 0	97/ 76 PC	95/ 72 T
Indianapolis	82/ 63 0	73/ 52 Sh	73/ 50 PC
Jackson	97/ 66 0	95/ 71 PC	90/ 72 T
Jacksonville	90/ 73 0.02	90/ 72 T	90/ 70 T
Kansas City	69/ 55 0.18	76/ 53 PC	79/ 53 S
Key West	91/ 83 0	91/ 82 S	90/ 82 S
Las Vegas	94/ 78 0	96/ 74 PC	93/ 74 S
Lexington	85/ 63 0	74/ 58 C	76/ 49 C
Little Rock	89/ 69 0	79/ 68 Sh	84/ 62 PC
Los Angeles	89/ 68 0	86/ 65 S	78/ 65 PC
Louisville	86/ 66 0	75/ 60 Sh	76/ 54 PC
Memphis	90/ 69 0	79/ 67 Sh	82/ 63 PC
Miami	92/ 80 0.04	93/ 80 T	92/ 79 T
Milwaukee	66/ 56 0.44	67/ 55 PC	63/ 50 PC
Mpls.-St. Paul	73/ 53 0	65/ 48 Sh	70/ 56 S
Nashville	89/ 67 0	79/ 65 Sh	81/ 57 C
New Orleans	93/ 75 0	91/ 76 PC	92/ 77 T
Norfolk	83/ 70 0.08	87/ 71 S	81/ 70 T
Oklahoma City	74/ 63 0.25	75/ 60 C	78/ 62 C
Omaha	75/ 49 0	78/ 54 PC	79/ 53 S
Orlando	94/ 77 0.04	92/ 76 T	93/ 74 T
Philadelphia	83/ 66 0.11	85/ 69 T	78/ 63 T
Phoenix	105/ 81 0	100/ 79 T	100/ 80 S
Pittsburgh	79/ 59 0	76/ 59 T	66/ 50 C
Portland, Me.	72/ 63 0.50	70/ 63 Sh	72/ 59 T
Portland, Ore.	77/ 59 0	78/ 60 PC	78/ 56 PC
Providence	80/ 66 0.25	77/ 66 PC	78/ 61 T
Raleigh	91/ 66 0	92/ 69 S	85/ 63 T
Reno	85/ 54 0	85/ 57 PC	86/ 55 S
Richmond	88/ 68 0	91/ 68 PC	81/ 60 T
Rochester	74/ 57 0	76/ 60 T	67/ 50 C
Sacramento	93/ 59 0	87/ 57 S	91/ 59 S
Salt Lake City	88/ 62 0	85/ 64 C	81/ 59 T
San Antonio	99/ 75 0	96/ 77 PC	96/ 78 PC
San Diego	82/ 70 Tr	77/ 67 PC	73/ 66 PC
San Francisco	74/ 59 0	71/ 59 PC	74/ 58 PC
San Jose	82/ 58 0	79/ 58 S	83/ 60 PC
San Juan	90/ 80 0.16	94/ 81 T	96/ 82 PC
Seattle	71/ 53 0.02	69/ 56 Sh	70/ 53 PC
Sioux Falls	75/ 49 0	73/ 52 S	79/ 53 S
Spokane	80/ 55 0	75/ 53 PC	75/ 55 PC
St. Louis	81/ 63 0.03	77/ 56 Sh	77/ 57 S
St. Thomas	92/ 81 0.04	93/ 82 W	94/ 82 W
Syracuse	74/ 59 Tr	81/ 64 T	70/ 54 T
Tampa	93/ 78 0	92/ 77 T	92/ 78 S
Toledo	78/ 61 0	71/ 54 Sh	66/ 47 PC
Tucson	101/ 77 0	98/ 74 T	95/ 70 T
Tulsa	75/ 64 0.21	77/ 62 C	81/ 61 C
Virginia Beach	84/ 69 0.12	85/ 73 PC	81/ 71 T
Washington	85/ 69 0.08	87/ 69 T	81/ 62 T
Wichita	66/ 58 0.84	78/ 54 PC	79/ 57 PC
Wilmington, Del.	82/ 65 0.16	86/ 68 PC	79/ 59 T

Africa	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Algiers	88/ 72 0	84/ 72 C	87/ 69 T
Cairo	100/ 83 0	87/ 80 PC	88/ 76 PC
Cape Town	55/ 46 0.15	63/ 41 S	69/ 52 S
Dakar	90/ 80 0.12	90/ 78 T	93/ 80 PC
Johannesburg	84/ 56 0	63/ 37 PC	65/ 43 S
Nairobi	82/ 58 0	81/ 60 T	77/ 58 T
Tunis	91/ 68 0	92/ 74 S	96/ 74 PC

Asia/Pacific	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Baghdad	108/ 78 0	108/ 78 PC	112/ 82 PC
Bangkok	90/ 77 0.18	92/ 82 T	91/ 81 T
Beijing	89/ 68 0.04	83/ 59 PC	82/ 61 PC
Damascus	91/ 64 0	95/ 65 PC	92/ 64 S
Hong Kong	85/ 77 0.55	88/ 80 Sh	88/ 79 C
Jakarta	96/ 73 0	95/ 75 S	94/ 76 S
Jerusalem	86/ 66 0	90/ 69 S	82/ 65 PC
Karachi	90/ 80 0	91/ 82 W	92/ 81 W
Manila	90/ 80 0	88/ 78 R	88/ 79 R
Mumbai	88/ 81 0.06	92/ 81 C	90/ 80 Sh
New Delhi	90/ 76 0.11	92/ 79 T	93/ 80 PC
Riyadh	110/ 87 0	111/ 85 PC	112/ 85 PC
Seoul	86/ 70 0.01	87/ 70 PC	80/ 66 R
Shanghai	86/ 71 0.06	87/ 74 PC	88/ 76 R
Singapore	89/ 79 0	89/ 81 Sh	90/ 80 T
Sydney	69/ 47 0	69/ 52 C	74/ 52 S
Taipei City	88/ 72 0	97/ 75 PC	96/ 76 PC
Tehran	93/ 66 0	94/ 72 S	94/ 69 S
Tokyo	88/ 79 0	88/ 76 S	89/ 77 S

Europe	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Amsterdam	75/ 68 0.01	75/ 60 C	67/ 49 PC
Athens	79/ 72 0	84/ 67 S	85/ 68 S
Berlin	86/ 55 0	87/ 62 S	69/ 48 R
Brussels	81/ 66 Tr	75/ 61 T	68/ 51 PC
Budapest	88/ 55 0	89/ 58 PC	87/ 64 PC
Copenhagen	66/ 61 0	70/ 58 C	66/ 50 PC
Dublin	67/ 57 0.74	62/ 44 PC	64/ 55 PC
Edinburgh	68/ 59 0.01	62/ 46 PC	61/ 53 PC
Frankfurt	88/ 61 0	85/ 63 PC	74/ 55 Sh
Geneva	88/ 61 0	83/ 62 PC	72/ 57 Sh
Helsinki	68/ 57 0	72/ 61 PC	66/ 50 Sh
Istanbul	77/ 68 0	81/ 66 S	81/ 65 S
Kyiv	79/ 46 0	80/ 54 PC	82/ 58 S
Lisbon	75/ 64 0.02	79/ 63 Sh	84/ 65 S
London	77/ 66 0	72/ 57 Sh	71/ 56 C
Madrid	79/ 63 0.76	81/ 59 S	84/ 62 S
Moscow	68/ 45 0	67/ 48 PC	69/ 49 C
Nice	81/ 73 0	81/ 70 PC	80/ 69 PC
Oslo	65/ 59 0.01	72/ 47 PC	65/ 44 S
Paris	82/ 70 0.01	71/ 60 T	74/ 58 C
Prague	82/ 55 0	85/ 61 PC	74/ 53 T
Rome	82/ 59 0	84/ 63 PC	83/ 66 PC
St. Petersburg	75/ 56 0	76/ 57 PC	75/ 57 PC
Stockholm	62/ 54 0	70/ 52 C	59/ 40 Sh
Vienna	88/ 57 0	87/ 62 PC	83/ 63 PC
Warsaw	84/ 57 0	85/ 59 C	86/ 61 C

North America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Acapulco	87/ 76 0	91/ 77 S	93/ 76 T
Bermuda	86/ 79 0.03	88/ 79 Sh	87/ 79 C
Edmonton	65/ 52 0	70/ 51 S	69/ 44 PC
Guadalajara	79/ 57 0	87/ 62 PC	86/ 62 PC
Havana	92/ 73 0	93/ 73 S	92/ 72 S
Kingston	94/ 84 0	96/ 86 S	95/ 85 S
Martinique	93/ 77 0	95/ 75 T	95/ 77 T
Mexico City	71/ 54 0	81/ 55 S	82/ 56 S
Monterrey	93/ 71 0	99/ 73 S	97/ 73 S
Montreal	72/ 59 0	74/ 63 T	69/ 52 C
Nassau	91/ 79 0	90/ 79 PC	92/ 79 S
Panama City	91/ 75 0.04	89/ 75 R	90/ 75 T
Quebec City	69/ 57 0	64/ 58 R	68/ 54 T
Santo Domingo	91/ 75 0	93/ 77 T	94/ 77 T
Toronto	74/ 61 0	71/ 52 R	65/ 49 C
Vancouver	66/ 61 0.06	62/ 55 R	66/ 52 S
Winnipeg	61/ 41 Tr	64/ 42 S	71/ 52 PC

South America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Buenos Aires	73/ 59 Tr	63/ 51 C	62/ 49 C
Caracas	92/ 76 0.10	95/ 76 T	95/ 76 T
Lima	71/ 66 0	73/ 67 C	73/ 68 PC
Quito	71/ 42 0	74/ 45 Sh	72/ 45 Sh
Recife	82/ 77 0.03	84/ 75 Sh	83/ 75 Sh
Rio de Janeiro	79/ 72 0	85/ 72 S	86/ 74 S
Santiago	59/ 47 0.54	60/ 37 S	62/ 44 PC

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BASEBALL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENJAMIN HOFFMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Benjamin Hoffman, far right, with his 9-year-old son, Wes. On Sunday, they were at Yankee Stadium, where Wes got a replica 1998 World Series ring and cheered his team on against the Brewers.

ESSAY

It Wasn't a First. But for a Father, It Was Merely the Best.

By BENJAMIN HOFFMAN

He didn't care that it was a no-hitter. He just wanted the Yankees to win.

More than five hours after we arrived at Yankee Stadium, my 9-year-old son, Wes, had waited in line for an hour in a rainstorm, collected his coveted (replica) 1998 Yankees World Series ring, talked me into buying him a T-shirt, visited the Gluten Free Grill twice, mourned the season-ending injury to Jasson Domínguez, cheered Aaron Judge so loudly that his voice was getting hoarse and brushed off every single mention I made that Corbin Burnes, the starter for the Milwaukee Brewers, was throwing an incredible game.

While the rain delayed Sunday's game between Milwaukee and the Yankees only 15 minutes, the soggy conditions persisted through the early innings and Burnes, the winner of the National League Cy Young Award in 2021, had the Yankees baffled.

After two innings, I texted a Brewers fan to say I was worried the Yankees would be no-hit. He replied that Milwaukee didn't have the offense for it to matter.

After 10 innings, we both looked prophetic, as it was a 0-0 tie and the Yankees had not managed a single hit off Burnes or the relievers Devin Williams and Abner Uribe.

But Wes, wearing his glove and sitting in the 200 level for the first time, didn't care about the historical significance of the moment. When I tried to explain the rarity of what we were seeing — that in the hundreds and hundreds of games I'd attended, as a reporter and as a fan, that I'd never seen a no-hitter in person — he shrugged and said he just wanted the Yankees to win.

After nearly 20 years of watching the game professionally, worrying a lot about deadlines and what the game's result would mean for either team, it was an incredible reminder of what it means to be a fan above all else.

When Milwaukee's Tyrone Taylor finally drove in the game's first run with a single in the 11th, Wes didn't flinch. Oswaldo Cabrera, his fifth favorite Yankee after Judge, Anthony Volpe, Giancarlo Stanton and Gerrit Cole, would be up in the next inning.

Did it matter that Cabrera was a second-year utility player who came into the game hitting .207? It did not. After all, Gary Phillips had written a feature in The New York Times about the pearl necklace Cabrera wears, and the only thing that bothered Wes was that we had left his replica of that necklace at home.

When Cabrera doubled in a run to tie the score and end my chance at watching a bit of baseball history (while also getting me off the hook for a deadline story), Wes wasn't even a bit surprised. I think I got a "Sorry, Dad," but he did not mean it.

In the 12th, Milwaukee managed two more runs and the stadium started to empty. I joked that they'd all run back to their seats as soon as the Yankees hit a two-run homer and Wes, not understanding that I was joking, nodded. "They'll look like IDIOTS."

On the fourth pitch of the 12th inning, Stanton made them look like idiots. His game-tying, 419-foot two-run homer to center field sent the remaining crowd into a frenzy and earned me the most earnest hug I've had in ages.

The only moment all day in which Wes seemed concerned was when Anthony Misiewicz came on to pitch for the Yankees to start the 13th. You see, Misiewicz is not on the Yankees' roster in MLB The Show 23, so Wes did not know a lot about him. Luckily Misiewicz, pitching for his third team this season, was up to the challenge, keeping things tied.

As the bottom of the 13th started, Wes was on his feet for Cabrera to win the game. On a long day that had involved waiting in so many different ways, we had to wait one more batter. But Kyle Higashioka, who did not even enter the game until the 10th, got to be the hero, crushing a double to left that drove in Everson Pereira to win the game.

The next several minutes were mostly jumping and screaming as Frank Sinatra sang "New York New York."

We walked out of the Stadium, 6 hours 24 minutes after we'd arrived, with Wes saying it was the greatest game he'd ever seen.

And his father, having been so sad to have missed his chance to finally see a no-hitter but so happy to have watched his son get everything he wanted, got a gift of his own: Sarah Langs, M.L.B.'s inimitable numbers wizard, posted to social media that it was only the fourth time in major league history that a team had been no-hit into the 11th inning and proceeded to win.

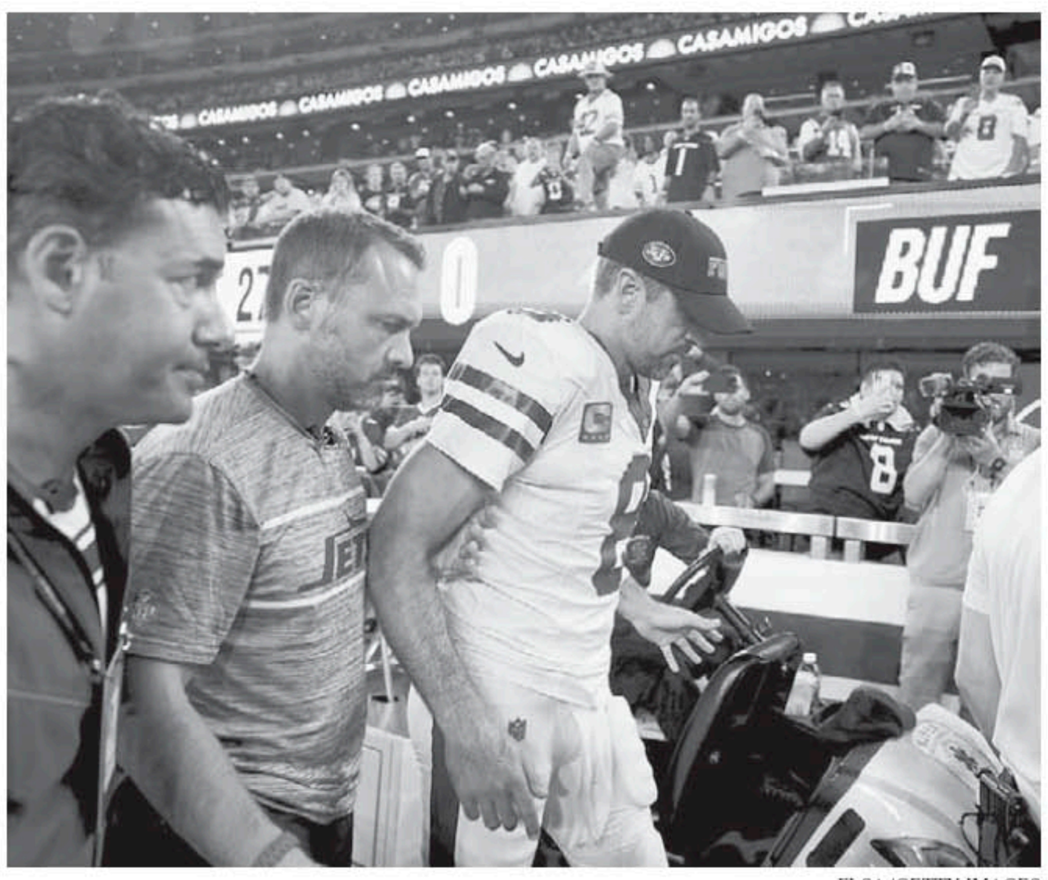
We hadn't seen a no-hitter. We had seen something better.

WENDELL CRUZ/USA TODAY SPORTS

Kyle Higashioka being mobbed after his winning R.B.I. in the 13th inning. The Yankees had not had a hit until one out in the 11th.

Finally being there to see a no-hitter would have to wait.

PRO FOOTBALL



ELSA/GETTY IMAGES

The Jets brought in quarterback Aaron Rodgers this off-season in the hopes he could help them end a 12-season playoff drought.

Rodgers, in First Jets Game, Leaves With an Ankle Injury

By EMMANUEL MORGAN

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The Jets' star quarterback and off-season acquisition, Aaron Rodgers, made a short debut on Monday night, leaving the game against the Buffalo Bills with an ankle injury on his first series.

The team announced in the second quarter that Rodgers would not return to the game, zapping the excitement from the crowd at MetLife Stadium.

On the Jets' third official offensive play, left tackle Duane Brown missed a block against Bills linebacker Leonard Floyd. Rodgers tried to escape, but Floyd sacked Rodgers and rolled his lower body as they both went to the ground. Rodgers stood up, but soon sat down and rocked on his back, appearing to slightly grimace in pain.

With assistance from Jets staff members, Rodgers walked to a medical tent before being transported to the locker room on the back of a cart.

Zach Wilson, the 2021 first-round pick whose uneven play last year led to his being benched, relieved Rodgers. The possession ended with a punt.

The team traded for Rodgers in April, days before the N.F.L. draft, looking to lift the club to playoff contention. Rodgers played for the Packers for 18 seasons, winning a Super Bowl and four Most Valuable Player Awards, but sought a trade after his relationship with the franchise had soured during his final three seasons in Green Bay.

After a promising 5-2 start in 2022, fueled by a stout defense and effective rushing attack, the Jets finished with a 7-10 record and missed the playoffs. Rodgers was expected to propel the Jets to the postseason for the first time in 12 years, the longest active drought in the N.F.L.

KEEPING SCORE

Giants' Opener: 'It Was a Bad Game'

By VICTOR MATHER

The Giants got the kickoff at home on Sunday night and advanced to the Dallas Cowboys' 8 in nine plays. What a start to the season!

What a start indeed. Graham Gano's field goal try was blocked and returned for a touchdown by the Cowboys' Noah Igbinoghene. The reversal seemed somehow to bless Dallas and curse the Giants. After 60 minutes, the Giants had scored zero points, and the visiting Cowboys had scored 40.

"We got beat all the way around, from coaching to playing," Giants Coach Brian Daboll said. "Don't sugarcoat it; it was a bad game," he added, showing a keen ability to read a scoreboard.

Daniel Jones passed for only 104 yards for the Giants, had two interceptions and two fumbles (both were recovered) and was sacked seven times. Saquon Barkley could do little to help: He managed only 51 yards on 12 carries.

Dallas took a 26-0 halftime lead without even putting together a long touchdown drive, instead scoring on the blocked field goal return, a field goal, an interception return, another field goal and a 38-yard drive after another interception. Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott had only 143 yards passing. He didn't need any more and could have won the game with far less.

It was the fifth lowest passing total for a team winning by 40 or more points. (In 2005, the Seattle Seahawks' defense overwhelmed the Philadelphia Eagles by 42-0, while Matt Hasselbeck passed for 98 yards for the winners.)

Coming off a 9-7-1 playoff season, the Giants were not necessarily expected to win the N.F.C. East. But they also weren't expected to be flat-out bad. And they were on Sunday night.

ED MULHOLLAND/USA TODAY SPORTS

Giants quarterback Daniel Jones was sacked seven times, and DaRon Bland returned an interception for a Dallas score.

"This wasn't our best game, there's no doubt about it," Jones said. On the plus side, it also was not their worst.

As awful as it seemed, the game was not the biggest shutout loss for the Giants. That was a 45-0 shellacking in 1948 against the Eagles. "The New York Football Giants had little going for them today," The New York Times helpfully pointed out the next morning.

But among games in Week 1, when hopes tend to be high even for the most pessimistic fan bases, it was the worst for the Giants and fifth worst overall.

If there is a sign of hope for the Giants, and their fans might need an electron microscope to spot one at the moment, it might be found in history. Two of the four teams with worse opening-week shutout losses ended up having good seasons.

Bad can still portend bad, of course: The 1954 Baltimore Colts, who lost to the Los Angeles Rams in their first game by 48-0, ended up 3-9, and the 1999 Cleveland Browns, who lost by 43-0 to the Pittsburgh Steelers, finished 2-14.

But the 1989 Steelers rebounded from a 51-0 loss to the Browns to finish 9-7, and in 1991, Detroit lost by 45-0 to Washington but finished 12-4. Both those teams won a playoff game as well. (The Lions have not won one since.)

As bad as Sunday was, it was far from the worst shutout loss in N.F.L. regular season history. That came in 1934 when a team called the Cincinnati Reds lost to the Eagles, 64-0.

The Reds were kicked out of the league after that game and never played again. Say what you want about the Giants' effort on Sunday night, but they will line up in Arizona to face the Cardinals next Sunday.

Right?

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PUBLIC AUCTION SALE
RE: NYC Parking Violations Bureau Vs. Various Judgment Debtors I will sell at Public Auction for City Marshal Kenneth Giachetta By Stuart L. Medow, CAI Auctioneer on Thursday, September 14, 2023 At 9:30AM At Ken Ben Industries 1908 Shore Pkwy, Brooklyn, N.Y., 11214, the right, title and interest of the judgment debtors in & to the Following Vehicles:

03CHEVR	1GBFG15T031180517
11BMW	WBAPK5C53BA655034
11SUBARU	4S3BMBK68B3252056Slvg
00BUICK	1G4HP54K2Y4142146
06HONDA	5FNRL38816B128087
09CHEVR	2G1WS57MX91308037
06 INFINITI	JNKAY01P96M254077Slvg
02CHEVR	3GNFK16Z62G361299Lien
90MAZDA	JM1BG232XL0107199Slvg
12HYUNDAI	5NPEB4AC4CH314077
10FORD	1FAHP3GN7AW153836
14CHEVR	1G1PA5SH1E7233436
13FORD	3FA6P0K96DR316077
17KIA	3KPFK4A77HE112711Lien
01ME/BE	WDBLJ70G01F182120Slvg
13FORD	3FADP4AJ0DM173778
12NISSAN	1N4AA5AP5CC859684Slvg
13HYUND	5NPDH4AE0DH244350Slvg
12CHEVR	2GNALBEK8C6180980
09CHEVR	KL1TD66E29B646771
15NISSAN	5N1AT2MV2FC756218
04FORD	1FMZU72K14UB20872Lien
08NISSAN	JN8AS58V88W404981
07BMW	WBAWB33517PV70634
03NISSAN	JN1DA31D73T505394
07HONDA	1HGCM56767A169626Slvg
05NISSAN	5N1AR18W65C771573
13FORD	1FTNE1EW7DDB16269Lien
18BMW	WBA4J3C55JBL03771Lien
03SUZUK	JS2RD41H635200045
02LEXUS	JTJHF10U720252175
01TOYOTA	JT2BF22K610296184
15GMC	3GTU2WEC6FG107186Lien
08HONDA	1HGCP26478A145655
07CADILLAC	1GYFK66807R310329
09CHEVR	1GBJG316291164253
06INFINITI	JNKAY01FX6M250605
09DODGE	2D8HN44E59R538456
07GMC	1GKDT13S072224996
15NISSAN	1N4AL3AP1FN396532
11CHEVR	KL1TD6DE8BB127927
00DODGE	1B4HS28Z6YF162197
07KIA	KNAFG526777112586
12HONDA	1HGCP2F46CA204137Lien
07TOYOTA	4T1BE46K67U640089
06CHEVR	1GCGG25V061227637
05DODGE	2D4FV48T55H550754
13HONDA	1HGCR2F31DA255225Slvg
11HYUNDAI	KMHDH4AEXBU111187
08MITSUB	4A3AB36F48E023403
07DODGE	1D7HE48P07S242269
05BMW	5UXFA135X5LY17033
10HONDA	2HGFA1F98AH536907
03HONDA	2HGES16523H580474
04BMW	5UXFA13594LU40662
19NISSAN	1N4BL4BV5KC235095Lien
05INFINITI	JNRAS08W85X210464
04GMC	1GNET16S346134670
18MITSUB	JA4AZ3A36JZ066645Lien
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13HONDA	1HGCR2F71DA144936Slvg

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Richard Davis, Luminous Bassist Across a Galaxy of Genres, Dies at 93

By ANDREY HENKIN

Richard Davis, an esteemed bassist who played not just with some of the biggest names in jazz but also with major figures in the classical, pop and rock worlds, died on Wednesday in Madison, Wis. He was 93.

His death was announced by Persia Davis, his daughter, who said he had been in hospice care for the last two years. Mr. Davis had taught music at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Mr. Davis, who was named a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master in 2014, appeared on more than 600 albums. A first-call player for some of the most important figures in jazz history, he had fruitful collaborations with the reed player Eric Dolphy (whose composition “Iron Man” was named for him) and the pianist Andrew Hill. He was a member of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra, which performed every Monday night at the Village Vanguard in New York, from the ensemble’s debut in 1966 until 1972.

His advanced technique, especially with the bow, led to work with classical orchestras under Igor Stravinsky and Leonard Bernstein. His adaptability resulted in sessions with Van Morrison, Bruce Springsteen, Paul Simon and Bonnie Raitt.

Mr. Davis made 30 albums as a leader or co-leader from 1967 to 2007. He was named best bassist in the DownBeat magazine readers poll from 1968 to 1972.

Reviewing a 1986 performance at Sweet Basil in Greenwich Village by a band led by Mr. Davis and featuring Freddie Waits on drums, the New York Times music critic Robert Palmer wrote: “The relaxed, slightly behind-the-beat swing typical of so many jazz rhythm sections is not for them. Their accents fall right up on top of the beat, and they vary their springy forward momentum with rhythmic whirlpools and rapids and an explosive sense of dynamics.”

Richard Davis was born on April 15, 1930, in Chicago. His mother died in childbirth, and he was adopted by Robert and Elmora Johnson. He was exposed to music through the records his mother had collected in her native New Orleans and the hymns Mr. Johnson would sing around the house.

BRENT NICASTRO

BRENT NICASTRO, VIA UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON ARCHIVES

MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Richard Davis, from left, in 1978, 1989 and 2014, had a sound “full of freedom,” a fellow bassist said. He played on over 600 albums.

He attended DuSable High School in Chicago, where he studied music under Walter Dyett, who mentored many future jazz stars, and he started playing the bass at 15. As he recalled in a 2013 interview published in the American Federation of Musicians magazine Allegro: “I was just enthralled by the sound. The bass was always in the background and I was a shy kid. So I thought maybe I’d like to be in the background.”

Mr. Davis credited Mr. Dyett with pushing him to play across styles, and during high school he also studied with Rudolf Fahsbender of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He would go on to receive a bachelor’s degree in music education from the VanderCook College of Music in Chicago in 1952.

As a young player in Chicago, Mr. Davis was mentored by local bassists like Wilbur Ware and Eddie Calhoun. While still in college, he performed with the pianist and bandleader Sun Ra, who at the time was still billed as Sonny Blount.

His first major gig was with the pianist Ahmad Jamal in 1952. He then went on the road with another pianist, Don Shirley (whose story was told in the movie “Green Book”); this led to his initial recordings and eventually to his move, in 1954, to New York, where he worked with the singer Sarah Vaughan from 1957 to 1962.

In a 2005 interview for The New York City Jazz Record, Mr. Davis spoke of how he used aspects of his classical study and his time with Ms. Vaughan to create his particular bowing technique:

IMPULSE!

He teamed with the drummer Elvin Jones in the 1960s.

“Some of the first bass players used the bow to play the walking bass line. And I heard all of that coming up as a kid. Therefore, when you start to study books of bass methods, you start out with the bow no matter what your intentions are, so there must be some intertwining of what I heard as a kid, what I heard working with Sarah Vaughan, wanting to imitate those vocal sounds.”

After his time with Ms. Vaughan, Mr. Davis’s reputation began to grow rapidly, as did his discography. The year 1964 was an especially significant one; he played on Mr. Dolphy’s last studio recording, “Out to Lunch!”; Mr. Hill’s seminal “Point of Departure”; the drummer Tony Williams’s first album, “Life Time”; and the saxophonist Booker Ervin’s “The Song Book.”

Three years later, Mr. Davis made his first album under his own name, “Heavy Sounds,” on which he and the drummer Elvin Jones were co-leaders, released on the Impulse! label. Over the next several years, his work outside the jazz world expanded. His credits included acting as musical director for Mr. Morrison’s album “Astral Weeks” and providing the haunting bow work at the end of “The Angel,” on Mr. Springsteen’s album “Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J.”

Mr. Davis continued to release albums regularly through the new millennium. In the late 1960s and ’70s he was also a member of the New York Bass Violin Choir, led by his fellow bassist Bill Lee, playing alongside other luminaries of the instrument like Ron Carter, Milt Hinton and Sam Jones. In the late 1980s, he was a founding member of New York Unit, a trio with the pianist John Hicks and the drummer Tatsuya Nakamura, which recorded eight albums for Japanese labels through 1998.

In an email, Mr. Carter said Mr. Davis was “an incredible bassist, a great teacher and my dear friend.”

Mr. Davis left New York in 1977 to take a position as a professor of music and music history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. “I got a call offering me a job at the university in Madison because they didn’t have a bass teacher on campus,” he told OnWisconsin, the university’s alumni magazine, in 2011. “I said, ‘Where’s Madison?’ I asked around if anyone had heard of the place because this school kept calling me. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about the importance of teaching others, and I had always wanted to teach young people. I thought maybe it was time.”

Joining jazz giants as well as Stravinsky and Springsteen.

He retired from teaching in 2016. In 2018, Richard Davis Lane in eastern Madison was named in his honor.

Complete information on survivors was not immediately available.

In addition to his recorded work and his influence on generations of students, Mr. Davis leaves behind two legacies — one musical, the other societal.

The Richard Davis Foundation for Young Bassists, which he created in 1993, conducts an annual conference for young players to learn from professionals and perform with one another. And in 2000, Mr. Davis established the Madison chapter of the Center for the Healing of Racism, an outgrowth of his founding in 1998 of the Retention Action Project at the University of Wisconsin to improve graduation rates for students of color.

His activism was connected to his earliest experiences trying to be a classical player, he said in the 2005 interview:

“My environment with race issues started the day I was born. You’re born with dark skin, and that itself brings on attitudes of other people who are not dark-skinned to see you as someone to be oppressed and not to be given equal chances in society. So that is something that is permanent.

“I was 18 years old and I could play any and all of the European classical music,” he continued, “but you weren’t allowed to participate in the symphony orchestra because there were racial issues and prejudices. They didn’t want to see you.”

The bassist William Parker, who studied with Mr. Davis as a young man in New York, said: “Richard Davis was a beautiful musician and human being. He reminded me of an African king, regal and strong. I praise him not because he could play both classical and jazz. I applaud him because the brother had a big, poetic sound full of freedom.”

Max Gomez, 72, Medical Reporter on TV for 4 Decades

By RICHARD SANDOMIR

Max Gomez, an award-winning medical and science journalist who delivered informed reports for more than 40 years on TV stations in New York and Philadelphia, most recently during the Covid-19 pandemic, died on Sept. 2 at his home in Manhattan. He was 72.

His partner, Amy Levin, said the cause was head and neck cancer, with which he had been diagnosed four years ago.

Billed as “Dr. Max,” Mr. Gomez brought an easygoing gravitas to reporting on subjects like vaccinations, knee replacements, prostate cancer, colonoscopies, sickle cell anemia and, when he himself contracted them, Lyme disease and the MRSA infection. One of his reports on Alzheimer’s disease focused on his father, a physician, who was swindled as his memory abandoned him.

Dr. Gomez had been chief medical correspondent at WCBS, Channel 2, in New York City since 2007 and made his last appearance there in March 2022. He also worked at WNBC, Channel 4, and WNEW, Channel 5 (now WNYW), as well as KYW, Channel 3, in Philadelphia.

“What he did best was to care deeply and combine that with being able to explain complex things so well that regular folks could understand them,” Dan Forman, a former managing editor of the Channel 2 news department, said by phone. “And he would activate it by helping viewers find the help they needed.”

Using an easygoing gravitas to help viewers find care.

Dr. Gomez won seven local Emmy Awards in New York and two in Philadelphia, and some of his work was seen nationally, on the CBS News program “48 Hours” and on NBC News. He was also a semifinalist in NASA’s journalist-in-space program, which was suspended indefinitely after the shuttle Challenger exploded in 1986, and a co-author of three books, among them “Cells Are the New Cure: The Cutting-Edge Medical Breakthroughs That Are Transforming Our Health” (2017, with Dr. Robin L. Smith).

He was a regular presence on Channel 2 from the start of the pandemic, when there were very few diagnosed Covid cases in the United States. For two years, as he dealt with cancer, he explained the medical issues facing viewers; showed how the coronavirus mutates; and sorted through infection data and studies.

He was not a medical doctor — he had a doctorate in neuroscience — and he and the stations where he worked were sometimes criticized for referring to him as Dr. Max Gomez. “Max doesn’t tell people he’s an M.D., nor do we,” Paula Walker, then an assistant news director at Channel 4, told The Philadelphia Inquirer in 1991. “In our estimation, he’s probably more informed than the average health reporter.”

Maximo Marcelino Gomez III was born on Aug. 9, 1951, in Havana and moved to Miami with his family three years later. His father was an obstetrician and gynecologist; his mother, Concepción (Nespral) Gomez, worked for Cubana Airlines, Cuba’s national carrier, and later for Avianca, the largest airline in Colombia.

After graduating from Princeton University in 1973 with a bachelor’s degree in geosciences, Dr. Gomez earned a Ph.D. in neuroscience from the Wake Forest University School of Medicine in 1978. He then became a National Institutes of Health postdoctoral fellow at Rockefeller University in Manhattan.

While studying there, he chose not to pursue a career in research or academia, but rather to look for work in the media that would make use of his scientific background.

“When I first decided to go after television, it was because I thought that if I didn’t, 20 years from now I’d be saying, ‘What if?’ ” he told The Philadelphia Daily News in 1985.

He added: “Why television? Well, if I said money and ego aren’t part of it, then I’d be lying to you or to myself.”

He contacted Mark Monsky, the news director of Channel 5’s “10 O’Clock News,” who gave him a one-month tryout in July 1980 that turned into a four-year stay. While there, Dr. Gomez was one of the first television reporters to focus on the AIDS crisis, according to Ms. Levin, who was then a producer at the station.

SYLVAIN GABOURY/PATRICK McMULLAN, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Max Gomez in 2019. Billed as “Dr. Max,” he was not a medical doctor but held a doctorate in neuroscience. He was a familiar face on stations in New York and Philadelphia.

Dr. Gomez moved to KYW in late 1984 and stayed there for six years. While there, he received an award from United Press International for his documentary on AIDS. He later received an award from New York City’s health department for his coverage of the 9/11 attacks while he was working for Channel 4.

“Fear and anxiety levels were out of control in the city, but we were spending the first 20 minutes of every broadcast scaring the living daylights out of people,” he said in an interview in 2016 for the newsletter of CaringKind, an nonprofit Alzheimer’s caregiving organization, “and then, as my news director said, at the end of the show, I had 90 seconds to talk them off the ledge.”

He moved to Channel 2 in 1994 and returned to Channel 4 in 1997 where, after nearly a decade, he was let go when the station cut costs. He came back to Channel 2 in 2007.

In addition to Ms. Levin, Dr. Gomez is survived by a daughter, Katie Gomez; a son, Max IV; and a brother, George. His marriage to SuElyn Charnesky ended in divorce.

In the 1985 Philadelphia Daily News interview, Dr. Gomez said he viewed his role seriously: Being on television, he said, gave him credibility and a major responsibility.

“I feel I owe it to people to be their first filter,” he said. “So if I’m talking about a health cure, I want to know where has this information been published. I present the best product I can. I know that it’s scientifically accurate.”

Deaths

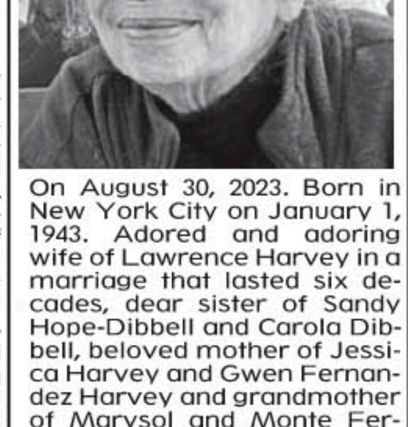
Ader, Richard
Flank, William
Frieze, Cary
Harvey, Joy
Hermanos, Ellen
Lazere, Bernice
Sesselberg, Elizabeth
Shuman, Sydney
Stern, David

ADER—Richard.
I mourn the loss of my dear friend, mentor, and partner. His friendship and guidance helped me understand the real estate business since the age of 17. His leadership in industry and charity was an example to all. I will miss him very much. My heart goes out to Pamela and the entire Ader Family.
Seymour Zises

FLANK—William.
At 91, Silver Spring, MD. Devoted husband, father, grandfather, Scoutmaster, chemist, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater environmentalist, and washtub bass player. Dr. Flank was Industrial & Engineering Chemistry chair of the American Chemical Society (twice), and Fellow of ASTM and ACS. He innovated in petroleum refining, plastics, green chemistry, and 3D printing. His Chappaqua Troop 1 escapades were chronicled by New York Time's Peter Applebome, in Scout's Honor as "an Old Testament prophet on a bad hair day," teaching leadership with high expectations - and canoeing's J-stroke. He leaves his wife of 67 years, Sandra, children Sharon (Max), Shalom (Deborah), and grandchildren Nicole and Becky.

FRIEZE—Cary J.,
a Morristown attorney passed away on September, 2, 2023 at Overlook Hospital from a heart attack. Mr. Frieze, age 75, practiced law for approximately fifty years primarily in Morristown, NJ. He was a patron of the arts and a lifelong supporter and board member of the Smithsonian. He leaves behind his brother and two nieces.

HARVEY—Joy Dibbell.



On August 30, 2023. Born in New York City on January 1, 1943. Adored and adoring wife of Lawrence Harvey in a marriage that lasted six decades, dear sister of Sandy Hope-Dibbell and Carola Dibbell, beloved mother of Jessica Harvey and Gwen Fernandez Harvey and grandmother of Marysol and Monte Fernandez. A lifetime Greenwich Villager who loved her old family home in Clinton, Connecticut, Joy graduated from Hunter College High School in 1960 and attended Barnard briefly before marrying Larry, an architect who would specialize in low-income housing. The creator of many sensuous, full-bodied oil paintings, Joy taught art gratis at the Village's legendary P.S.3, designed the art for Gwen and Juan Fernandez's Nuyorican Cafe in San Juan, and as co-founder of Taxing Women applied her math skills and patience to the complicated filings of artists and musicians. Many remember how welcome guests were in her home for a meal, a night, even months. She was so nice that, in her work for the non-profit, self-managed coop she'd grown up in, plumbers and electricians were glad to go the extra mile for Joy. She just loved being alive.

HERMANOS—Ellen B.

Ellen B. Hermanos, painter, and psychotherapist, died peacefully after a short illness in hospice near her adopted home of Boston, at the age of 58. A professional painter for over 30 years, her work was exhibited in galleries across the Northeast. She built up a thriving private therapy practice. For friends, she was always the best to go to for advice. One of her art dealers noted the connection between uncovering layer after layer of meaning in both her art and her psychotherapy practice. Ellen Hermanos graduated from the Frederick Gunn School (formerly The Gunnery), William Smith College, earned an M.S.W. at Simmons College, and continuously studied color theory. Ellen Hermanos is survived by her parents, Robert and Susan Hermanos of New York, her brother, Steve Hermanos, her sister-in-law Karin Taylor, nephew Ansel Hermanos, step-daughter Chloe Braunstein, and a plethora of wonderful cousins and amazing friends. A memorial service will be held at Temple Emanu-El in Manhattan on September 12, 1pm.

LAZERE—Bernice Bravman,
97, of New York City, passed away peacefully with her daughters by her side on September 3, 2023. She is survived by Joan Kitner, Laurie Richter and her grandchildren Leah, Alan, Michael Kitner and Hannah Richter. Her son, Jay Gottlieb predeceased her as did her husband, Haskell Lazere, her parents Bertha and Phillip Bravman, her sister and brother, Alan Bravman and Sylvia Kottler. Bernice enjoyed a richly textured life, filled with love, family, many friends, travel and a dedicated connection with Central Synagogue, where she also served as a docent. She savored every aspect of NYC - theater, lectures, concerts, dining and contributing to her community. Bernice was the consummate host and relished entertaining at home. Bernice became director of Jewish Board of Family and Children Services' Family Location Division, before the internet existed. She attained great success finding and reuniting families with lost relatives worldwide...a remarkable woman. Bernice will be missed by all who were blessed to know her.

SESSELBERG—Elizabeth "Betty"
age 92, of Scarborough, ME, formerly of Southport, CT, passed away peacefully on September 4, 2023 with family by her side. Betty was born in Montreal in 1930. She grew up skiing, fishing and sailing. Not known as the best student at The Trafalgar School for Girls, she went on to find her calling in nursing. She graduated from the Montreal General Hospital and then received a graduate nursing degree with honors from Columbia University. Betty was an avid sailor and met her husband Arthur through sailing events. They married in December 1958 and had 2 children, Arthur Jr. and Henry (Hank). She worked as a nurse at New York Memorial Sloan Kettering until they moved to Westport and later Southport, CT in 1974. While raising her children she obtained a Master Gardener qualification from the New York Botanical Gardens which fostered a lifelong love of gardening. In 1977, Betty joined the New York Visiting Nurse Service (VNS). As a field nurse she worked in all parts of the city. She provided care to the poor and celebrities alike and took care of some of the earliest AIDS patients. She cared for patients on September 12, 2001 near Ground Zero after the 9/11 attacks. During the 2003 blackout, she walked through a darkened subway tunnel and to New Jersey to stay with a friend ensuring she would be at work the next morning. Comically, she was given a street name ("Flash") by a patient who was a gang member. Betty loved bedside patient care and continued field work even as she moved into the nurse manager role. She was a nurse manager for VNS in the Bronx, Beth Abraham Home Care, and then VNS in Manhattan and mentored many generations of nurses. She helped develop a holiday meal and gift program for patients with no family, and singlehandedly cooked dozens of meals, recruiting coworkers, family and friends to deliver them on Christmas Eve. She "retired" at 72 but returned 6 months later to VNS in Manhattan as a teacher, doing field assessments and wound care. She continued to commute into New York working for VNS until she was 87. Betty was a longtime member of Pequot Yacht Club in Southport. She could often be found rowing in the harbor with her dog in the back of the boat until her 90th birthday. Betty is predeceased by her husband, Arthur Sesselberg, and her son Arthur Jr. She is survived by her son Dr. Henry Sesselberg (Tracy), of Cape Elizabeth, ME; daughter-in-law Abby Sesselberg (Arthur Jr.) of Guilford, CT; grandchildren, Herrick ("Harry") of Annapolis, MD, Graham, Meryl, and Alemnesh Sesselberg; and brother Dr. John Mills (Nancy) of Marion, MA. The family would like to thank the staff at Piper Shores in Scarborough, ME for their excellent care over the last two years. A private memorial will be held at a later date. Donations may be made in her memory to the New York VNS.

SHUMAN—Sydney R.
The Rockefeller University mourns the death of our beloved friend, benefactor, and Trustee Emerita Sydney R. Shuman. A leading light in the New York City philanthropic community, Sydney joined the Rockefeller University Council in 1995, commencing a nearly three-decades-long tenure with the university. In 2001, Sydney was elected to the university's Board of Trustees on which she served with distinction. She was elected a Trustee Emerita in 2017. With her husband, Stanley S. Shuman, Sydney generously supported many of the university's institutional priorities, including the endowment of a professorship, and the Women & Science and Parents & Science Initiatives. She and Stan were deeply involved with the life of the university, attending campus events and establishing friendships with members of our faculty and staff. In 1997, Sydney played a leading role in establishing Rockefeller's Women & Science Initiative, serving as one of its four Founding Chairs with Rockefeller University Council members Lydia Forbes, Isabel Furlaud, and Trustee Emerita Nancy Kissinger. Women & Science rapidly became central to Rockefeller's mission by introducing thousands of women to the university and underscoring the importance of basic scientific research, thus inspiring many to embrace science as a focus of their philanthropy. At the same time, the initiative played a pivotal role in advancing the careers of women investigators at Rockefeller by building a culture of opportunity and highlighting the crucial role of women in scientific discovery. With Sydney's guidance for more than 25 years, Women & Science has raised more than $50 million in support of Rockefeller's women researchers. In honor of their transformative work, Sydney and her fellow Women & Science Founding Chairs were awarded the 2015 David Rockefeller Award for Extraordinary Service to The Rockefeller University, the university's highest nonscientific honor. Sydney was deeply committed to the causes she embraced. Beyond Rockefeller, her pro bono work included serving as president, chair, and honorary chair of the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House; member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Women and Foreign Policy Advisory Council; trustee of Second Stage Theater; Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies; and board member of the Marc Haas Foundation. Sydney's legendary kindness and caring spirit, combined with her impeccable style, brought warmth and a sense of community to every occasion, and added much to the culture and community at Rockefeller. She will be profoundly missed by all whose lives she touched. We send our heartfelt sympathy to Sydney's cherished husband, Stan; her children and stepchildren: Gordon, Howard, David, and Michael, and their spouses; her adored grandchildren; and her entire family.

William Ford, Chair
Russell Carson, Chair Emeritus
Richard Lifton, President
Torsten Wiesel, President Emeritus
Daniel Kronauer, Stanley S. and Sydney R. Shuman Associate Professor
Marnie Imhoff, Senior Vice President, Development
Laurel Birch, Senior Director of Women & Science

STERN—David,
age 85, died September 8, 2023. Beloved husband, father and grandfather, he is survived by his wife of 44 years, Patricia Stern, his daughters Jackie (Jeff Potash), Sharon (Dann Brown), Valerie White (Marc Brodeur) and Leslie White, and his grandchildren Nick and Rosie Potash, AJ Brown, and Chloe Brodeur. Memorial service: Wednesday, September 13 at 10am at Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, 1534 Pennington Rd., Ewing, NJ. Full obituary at: orlandsmemorialchapel.com/David-Stern

In Memoriam

EVANS—Harold.
Feb. 18, 1935 - Sept. 12, 2017
Always cherished.
Forever loved.
Joan

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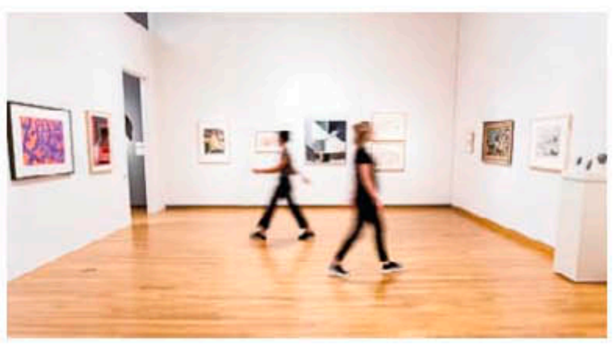
6 THEATER
Rachel McAdams heads to Broadway. BY MICHAEL PAULSON
2 DANCE REVIEW
Tanztheater Wuppertal takes new steps. BY ROSLYN SULCAS



5 ART
Details go haywire when A.I. curates an exhibition.
BY ZACHARY SMALL

Lauren Groff's new novel, 'The Vaster Wilds,' follows a 17-century woman who tries to survive on her own in the wilderness.

ZACK WITTMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The novelist Lauren Groff during a walk around Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park in Gainesville, Fla. She moved to the state 17 years ago.

When a Writer Tells You to Take a Hike

By ELIZABETH A. HARRIS

ORFORD, N.H. — Lauren Groff, the three-time National Book Award finalist, was marching through the woods of New Hampshire, her pants stuffed into her socks to keep out the ticks. Two muddy dogs jogged ahead of her and a reporter trotted along behind.

The outing was unusual for an author interview — and, given the pace of the hike, not an insignificant amount of exercise. Typically, these conversations take place over coffee or lunch, at a publisher's office or maybe in a writer's living room. But Groff had chosen something different: a five-mile hike through the woods and a swim in a pond, followed by a lunch of chickpea salad and a beet slaw with pistachio butter, all of which she made herself.

A former college athlete who still runs, swims and plays tennis regularly, Groff, 45, has a physicality about her that is central to how she lives and writes. That attention to the body is also central to her newest novel, "The Vaster Wilds," in which a young woman escapes from Jamestown, Va., in the 17th century, and tries to survive on her own in the wilderness.

"In Lauren, the intellectual and the physical work together in her writing process — her body is involved," said Sarah McGrath, her editor at Riverhead Books. "You can see that in this book in particular."

Groff, whose work slides between historical and contemporary settings, has had three New York Times best sellers and is unusually productive for a literary writer. "The Vaster Wilds," which Riverhead will release on Tuesday, will be published almost exactly two years after "Matrix," a finalist for the National Book Award. That

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Revisiting New York On the Edge of Ruin

A film about the city's 1975 fiscal crisis wins a national prize.

By SAM ROBERTS

On Oct. 29, 1975, Mike O'Neill, the editor of The Daily News, and Bill Brink, the managing editor, returned from lunch and asked whether President Gerald R. Ford, while addressing the National Press Club in Washington, had agreed to help New York City avoid bankruptcy.

The editors were read the definitive sentence from Ford's address: "I am prepared to veto any bill that has as its purpose a federal bailout of New York City to prevent a default."

As I recall — I was a reporter and editor at The Daily News at the time — Brink initially summed up the president's rejection with what was sometimes quaintly described back then as a two-word barnyard epithet. Then they refined the hulking front-page tabloid headline, a cri de coeur that encapsulated Washington's response to the city's plight and that would help cost Ford the presidential election the next year, ultimately becoming a metaphor for New York's resilience: "Ford to City: Drop Dead."

Those days of urban desolation, despair and painful recovery a half century ago are captured in the forthcoming documentary "Drop Dead City — New York on the Brink in 1975," which on Monday was awarded the fifth annual Library of Congress Lavine/Ken Burns Prize for Film.

"Drop Dead City" was directed by Peter Yost and Michael Rohatyn, a filmmaker and musician who had a unique perspective: It was Michael's father, Felix G. Rohatyn, an investment banker, who was recruited in 1975 by the heroic Gov. Hugh L. Carey of New York to help stave off the state's municipal bankruptcy.

Michael Rohatyn was only 12 when his father helped save the city. Perusing the old footage from that time and filming 200 addi-

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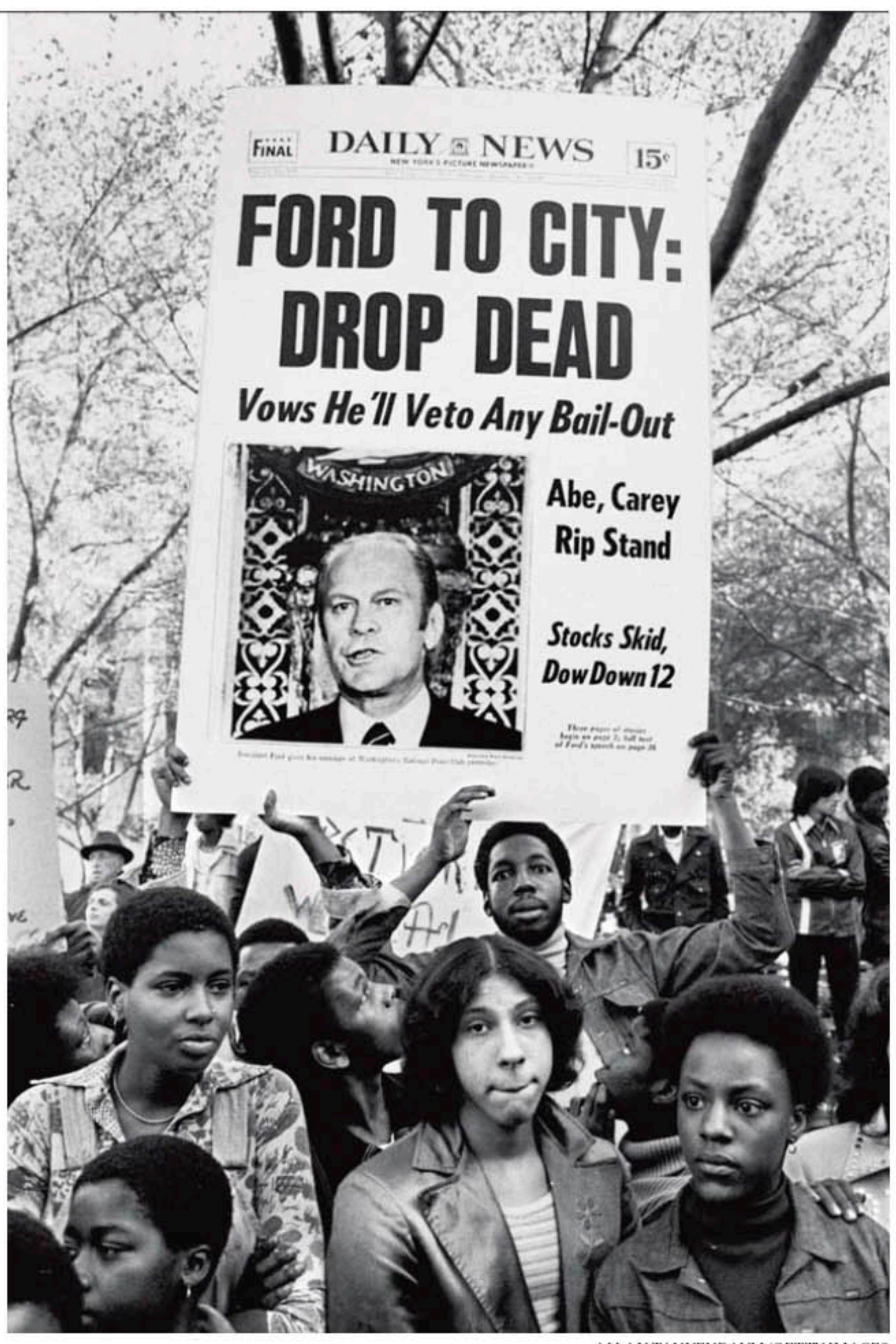

ALLAN TANNENBAUM/GETTY IMAGES

A 1975 headline in The Daily News summarized President Gerald R. Ford's rejection of a federal bailout for New York City as bankruptcy loomed.

At the Office, A Sisterhood Doesn't Click

'The Other Black Girl,' a new Hulu series, tracks the plight of an editorial assistant.

By LEIGH-ANN JACKSON

The loneliness, anxiety and discomfort that often comes with being the only Black person in a predominantly white space can turn any office into a mental and emotional minefield. But what if finally gaining a new Black co-worker only made matters worse?

"The Other Black Girl," a satirical workplace thriller premiering on Wednesday on Hulu, poses just such a quandary. The 10-episode series, developed for the streamer by Onyx Collective, is based on Zakiya Dalila Harris's best-selling 2021 novel of the same name and follows Nella Rogers (Sinclair Daniel), a put-upon editorial assistant, as the rat race leads her down unexpected paths.

Nella spends her days wilting under an ever-critical white gaze, enduring performative wokeness and passive-aggressive supervisors at the literary publishing com-

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When a Writer Tells You to Take a Hike

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

story follows a woman who builds a penurious 12th-century nunnery into a seat of female power and wealth.

Three years before that, in 2018, Groff published “Florida,” a story collection that was also a National Book Award finalist. In 2015, she published “Fates and Furies,” a novel that examines a marriage from the enormously divergent perspectives of the husband and wife. That book, too, was a National Book Award finalist, and Barack Obama’s favorite that year. A letter he wrote to Groff about the novel hangs, framed, on the wall of her home office.

But novel writing is an endurance sport, and Groff said it takes her about five years to complete one. She keeps up her publishing pace by working on several projects, even several novels, simultaneously, holding entire, vibrant worlds distinct in her mind. She began “The Vaster Wilds” before “Matrix,” she said, but finished “Matrix” first.

Those different projects live in different corners of her office, a former nursery with blue walls on the second floor of her house in Gainesville, Fla. When she shifts from one piece of writing to another, she doesn’t shuffle papers on her desk, but moves her body to another part of the room. On a recent Zoom-tour of her work space, she had one project going at either end of her long wooden desk and another on the daybed.

“I’m trying to Jedi-mind-trick myself into not putting so much pressure on any particular project by having them be really loose for the first really long span of time,” she said. “I’m writing toward — who knows? Letting it be exploration and joy, centered around either questions or a central thesis or an image.”

When Groff starts something new, she writes it out longhand in large spiral notebooks. After she completes a first draft, she puts it in a cardboard storage box — and never reads it again. Then she’ll start the book over, still in longhand, working from memory. The idea is that this way, only the best, most vital bits survive.

“It’s not even the words on the page that accumulate, because I never look at them again, really, but the ideas and the characters start to take on gravity and density,” she said.

“Nothing matters except for these lightning bolts that I’ve discovered,” she continued, “the images that are happening, the sounds that are happening, that feel alive. Those are the only things that really matter from draft to draft.”

Groff, who has a goofy sense of humor and an unpretentious erudition, was raised in Cooperstown, N.Y., in a family of athletes. Her sister, Sarah True, was an Olympic triathlete. Groff played soccer at Amherst College and met her husband, Clay Kallman, on the crew team. Kallman said that when they first got serious, he started running marathons to up his game.

“She’s got a lot of restless energy, she’s got a lot of motivation,” he said. “For her, writing has been a great outlet, and so have athletic pursuits.”

Groff and her family remain close. Though she lives in Gainesville, where Kallman owns and operates off-campus housing for University of Florida students, she spends every summer in New Hampshire, close to where her sister and her brother live, and where her parents have a house. Her parents and their golden retriever spend part of the year in Gainesville. (The New Hampshire house was the site of the interview for this article, which happened in the company of Groff’s dog, Olive, and her parents’ dog, Gem, who kept plopping down in mud puddles during the hike.)

When Groff agreed to move to Florida 17 years ago, she did so conditionally. She would relocate, she said, only if she could travel as needed — for writers’ retreats, for book tours — and if Kallman agreed to reassess periodically. There is a physical contract stating those terms, signed by her and Kallman, somewhere in her files. The document also delineates some of their child care plans — an arrangement that allows her to wake up at 5 a.m. and disappear into her writing for hours, without having to manage the routine of getting two children fed and out the door.

Groff and Kallman wake up together, they said, but the morning is not a time to chat.

“I get so mad at him if he tries to talk to me,” Groff joked about her husband. “I like the morning because it’s empty of people and ideas and you’re still sort of in a dream state until the caffeine kicks in. It’s the best time of day, for sure. It’s a very gentle time of day.”

In the afternoon, Groff deals with the business of being an author, responding to emails, doing publicity, writing blurbs. And she reads. A lot. In just the past few days, she said, she finished “Living and Dying With Marcel Proust,” completed a reread of “Moby-Dick” and started a graphic novel called “Roaming.” She estimates she reads about 300 books a year.

Groff will drop quotations into casual conversation, citing, say, Frank Lloyd Wright’s take on form and function, but she manages to do this in an entirely unaffected way, just tossing out an interesting nugget for consideration. Her editor, McGrath, said that Groff reread all of Shakespeare so she could write a version of “The Vaster Wilds” in iambic pentameter “just for fun,” as a way for her to master Elizabethan rhythms. (The final book is not in iambic pentameter.)

She is also a candid early reader for her author friends, like Hernan Diaz, whose novel “Trust” won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction this year. Groff, Diaz said, was one of the first people to read the book.

“She’s one of our finest living writers,” Diaz said. Her work, he said, has a profoundly ethical dimension, without “finger-wagging,” and her sentences are precise and complex, but also full of emotion. “This is a near impossible balance, one that I strive for as a writer all the time, to make the syntactical edifice as sound and capacious and beautiful as possible, but then fill it with emotion and heart and vibrancy. She does that.”

Groff said that in the midst of writing the books she had published, she had also started numerous projects that came to nothing — most of them now exiled to cardboard boxes behind a curtain in her office. But a few years ago, Kallman said, she brought a manuscript with her to a bonfire.

“She was like, well, this isn’t going to work,” he recalled. “So she threw it into the fire and it went up in flames. There’s a lot of creative destruction.”

But Groff said that giving up on projects — or even setting them on fire — doesn’t feel like failure, because none of that time or effort is wasted.

“It’s practice, right?” she said. “It’s like going out there and running five miles. It’s the same idea. Some days, it’ll be really tough and awful. And some days, you’ll see an alligator gilded by the sun.”

And then, she joked, you’ll run away from the giant reptile and hit your personal record.

‘Nothing matters except for these lightning bolts that I’ve discovered.’
LAUREN GROFF

ZACK WITTMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Lauren Groff on a recent walk in Gainesville, Fla. It takes her about five years to complete a novel.

ROSLYN SULCAS | DANCE REVIEW

Close Bodies, Soaring Space

The choreographer Boris Charmatz’s first new work for the Tanztheater Wuppertal, the company founded by Pina Bausch.

Liberté Cathédrale
Through Saturday at the Mariendom Church in Neviges, Germany; pina-bausch.de/en.

NEVIGES, GERMANY — Everyone needs an editor. Writers, directors, cooks, choreographers and designers all need a ruthless eye — internal or external — for their work to find its form; the sculpture within the block of stone. You might even define a great artist by the ability to pitilessly remove the inessential, no matter how clever the sentence or brilliant the movement composition.

There is plenty of fascinating movement in Boris Charmatz’s first new work, “Liberté Cathédrale,” for the Tanztheater Wuppertal in Germany, which opened here on Friday at the spectacular Mariendom church in Neviges, a 20-minute drive from Wuppertal. But the five-part piece is a capacious, messy, meandering grab bag of ideas, inspirations and associations that haven’t benefited from uncompromising and focused decision-making.

Charmatz became the director of Tanztheater Wuppertal last September, its fifth leader since the sudden death of its founder, Pina Bausch, in 2009. The troupe, the region’s most prominent cultural institution, has struggled to find its identity since Bausch’s death; the Charmatz premiere, attended by a considerable number of politicians, journalists and programmers, has been presented by the company and the media as the start of a new era. (There are also plans for a Pina Bausch Center, a major new cultural building for the city.)

Charmatz is an ambitious and interesting choice for this company. A well-known choreographer, he has never formed his own troupe or accepted commissions from existing companies. His pieces have often been conceived for museums, public and unconventional spaces; he has collaborated with other choreographers and written books about dance.

In most ways, his work could hardly be further from Bausch’s very specific mix of potent, surreal dramatic vignettes and flowing, gestural dance, designed for a proscenium stage. But for both choreographers, dancers are individuals who are passionately themselves onstage, rather than choreographic instruments. And both are fond of breaking the fourth wall and establishing a relationship between audience and performers.

The company already looks very different. Only two of the 26 dancers in “Liberté Cathédrale,” Michael Strecker and Aida Vainieri, are from the Bausch era; the others, including seven guests (all regular Charmatz performers), are of a younger generation. The setting, inside Gottfried Böhm’s 1968 Brutalist concrete cathedral, is spectacular, a vast rectangle with a soaring, jagged concrete roof that looks like a Cubist sculpture.

“Liberté Cathédrale” begins with a rush of dancers into the space, singing wordlessly, then flinging themselves to the floor, writhing frantically. Maintaining a beautiful a cappella chant (the voice training is by Dalila Khatir), the dancers perform variations on that sequence, rushing, slowing, freezing in place, then crumpling slowly to the floor, before frenziedly lashing, squirming and bouncing there.

The next four sections are each characterized by a specific sound, or its absence. In Part 2, bells chime incessantly and cacophonously as the dancers bunch and scatter with convulsive, shaking motions, dropping suddenly to the floor, gesturing toward the audience with opaque meaning, tussling together with close-bodied intensity.

In Part 3, they move in silence, mouths stretched wide open and heads tilted back, circling the church’s pulpit on their knees, miming or silently mouthing something to the audience. They might be refugees, with no language to offer their stories, or perhaps silenced victims of abuse.

Until this point, Charmatz maintains a certain amount of dramatic tension, despite longueurs. But in the fourth section, the dancers start to talk to audience members, then pull some into the performance space to form a circle in the near-dark. Nothing much happens for a long time, as performers circle around the periphery of the space and push through the audience, declaiming various non sequiturs, lines of poetry (“No man is an island”) and abrasive song (“What else is in the Teaches of Peaches? Like sex on the beaches”) or writhe wildly close by.

Here, it was striking to note the difference between the kind of amused complicity that Bausch evokes when her dancers address people in the audience, and the frequently aggressive, confrontational nature of the actions in “Liberté Cathédrale.”

The final section, dominated by a huge, layered, swelling organ sound (played by Phill Niblock), was strongest, with members of a tight-knit group pushing and pulling closely against one another like a single struggling organism. Sometimes dancers are slung across shoulders, sometimes balanced on backs in images evoking war, death, refugee migrations. Eventually they are carried or dragged away, until just one woman remains, balancing precariously on one leg as sound and lights are suddenly extinguished.

The dancers do an extraordinary job with the demanding material, and Charmatz has clearly given them freedom to explore physical ideas and push themselves to extremes. But he hasn’t mastered the outcome as he did in an earlier work, the much tighter “10,000 Gestures,” which featured similarly controlled chaos of a large group of dancers on individual and intersecting tracks.

“Liberté Cathédrale” will tour, but it’s hard to imagine it will have the same impact without the extraordinary space of Mariendom. Ultimately, it’s much closer to the site-specific installations that Charmatz has created over his career than to the theatrical pieces that made Tanztheater Wuppertal famous. Will he bridge the gap? Establish a new aesthetic? “Liberté Cathédrale” doesn’t tell us yet.

LASZLO SZITO

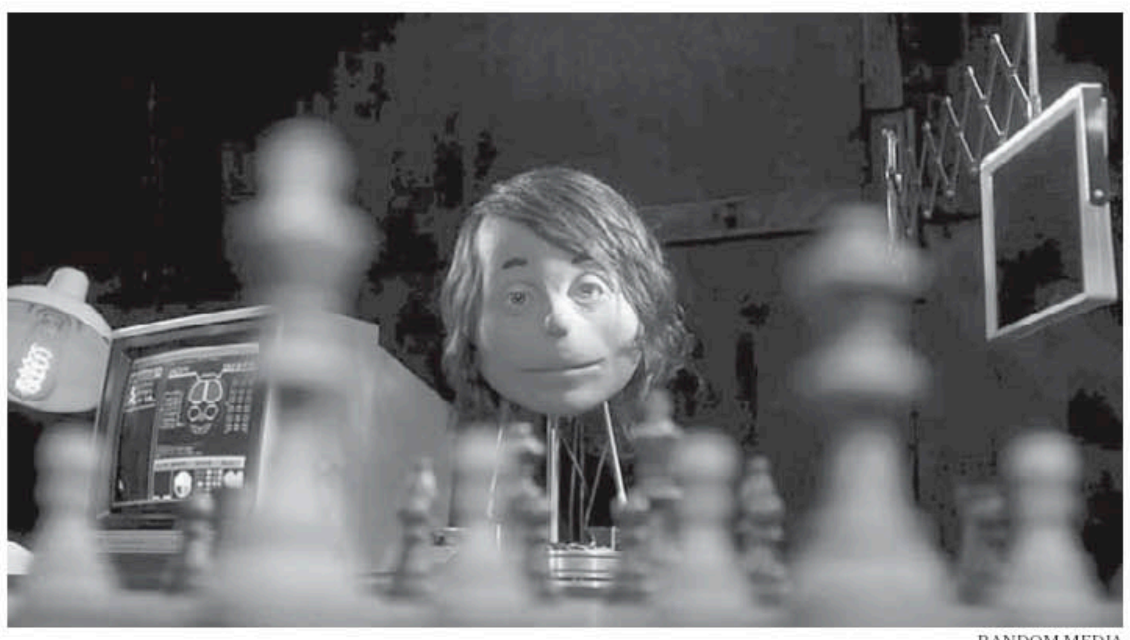
Johanna Elisa Lemke and Simon Le Borgne in Boris Charmatz’s “Liberté Cathédrale.”

ELISABETH VINCENTELLI | STREAMING SCI-FI

Surreal Adventures and Cute-Robot Charm

CLEOPATRA ENTERTAINMENT

GOOD GUYS PRODUCTIONS


RANDOM MEDIA

From top: the surreal "Shin Ultraman"; Jacob Buster and Emma Tremblay in "Aliens Abducted My Parents and Now I Feel Kinda Left Out"; and Vetro in "Life Cycle."

'Shin Ultraman'

Rent or buy it on most major platforms.

From the start, it's obvious that this is not a regular Kaiju movie. The genre, in which gigantic beasts à la Godzilla lay waste to cities and swaths of countryside, is not known for restraint, but "Shin Ultraman" is completely, unpredictably off the wall.

Captain Tamura (Hidetoshi Nishijima, from the radically different "Drive My Car") leads a task force dedicated to fighting the big monsters that turn up with clockwork regularity. "For some reason, Kaiju only appear in Japan," someone quips about the creatures's absence elsewhere in the world. But even this elite squad is flabbergasted when a mysterious helmeted giant clad in a superhero-like red-and-silver bodysuit shows up. Called Ultraman (a popular character who has been the subject of many iterations since its introduction in 1966), the newcomer helps the overwhelmed team battle aliens like Mefilas (Koji Yamamoto).

Both a reboot and a riff, "Shin Ultraman," which was directed by Shinji Higuchi and written by Hideaki Anno (the two also collaborated on "Shin Godzilla" in 2016), is a surreal trip. It's hard to oversell the eye-popping invention and droll humor on display here, but it's Higuchi's mise-en-scène that stands out, packed with odd angles and seemingly arbitrary shots, as when a character opens a computer file and the movie cuts to her feet under her desk. Shiro Sagisu's score is equally bonkers and disruptive, incorporating 1960s pop, thrash riffs, chamber suites and jazzy noodlings. It all amounts to pure joy.

'Tang and Me'

Stream it on Amazon.

Chances are you haven't heard of Deborah Install's "A Robot in the Garden" (2015), unless you live in Japan, where the novel has been adapted into a radio play, a stage musical and now this charming kid-friendly movie.

Ken (Kazunari Ninomiya) has a terminal case of arrested development, whiling away his days playing elaborate virtual-reality games and avoiding any hint of household work. One day, a rusty, taped-up robot turns up in the garden, offering its name as Tang. Shortly thereafter, Ken's fed-up wife, Emi (Hikari Mitsushima), kicks him out of their house. So he sets out for Atobit Systems, the company that manufactured Tang, to trade that old model for a brand-new one, which he will then give to Emi to get back in her graces.

The latest from the prolific director Takahiro Miki ("The Door Into Summer") does not revolutionize the cute-robot genre, but it is very effective. Naturally, Ken will change for the best, thanks to Tang — whose mysterious origin and initial purpose are at the heart of the story — but this utter predictability is a feature, not a bug, and is embraced as such by the film. Young viewers are likely to clamor for a toy version of the adorable bot, while their parents are more likely to be interested in the movie's awfully believable near-future, in which delivery drones crisscross the sky and robots are absolutely everywhere in daily life.

'Aliens Abducted My Parents and Now I Feel Kinda Left Out'

Rent or buy it on most major platforms.

When the Levan family moves to a quaint Western town, the teenage Itsy (the excellent Emma Tremblay) is not especially pleased: She is now living in the middle of nowhere, and being singled out as the new kid is never fun. Maybe that's why she immediately connects with her new classmate Calvin (Jacob Buster, a charmer bound to resurface in bigger-budget projects), who is ostracized as the local weirdo. Calvin is a heartthrob in nerd clothing — more specifically in a spacesuit, which he is prone to wear to school — and is on a quest to find the parents (Will Forte and Elizabeth Mitchell) he hasn't seen in 10 years. He is convinced they were taken by aliens one fateful night and has been searching the skies ever since. Itsy pretends to befriend him for a journalism project, though it's clear she's actually taken by Calvin's quirky sincerity, and perhaps even by his far-fetched story about extraterrestrial creatures secretly visiting Earth whenever a certain comet gets close.

Jake Van Wagoner's film is a throwback to 1980s family-friendly fare, and it nicely captures the formula's basic elements, down to the presence of a smart-aleck boy (Itsy's brother, Evan, played by Kenneth Cummins), an unironic embrace of the cutesy and the cheesy in equal proportions and, perhaps most important, a general good nature.

'Life Cycle'

Rent or buy it on most major platforms.

Carl (Adam Weber) lives in his grandparents' rec-room-like basement, seems to survive on protein bars and takeout, and watches old black-and-white movies on an ancient-looking TV set. The only other living presence in that den is Vetro (voiced by Kory Karam), an animatronic head with enormous blue eyes sitting on Carl's desk. A computer programmer, Carl is ambitious: "You are to become human," he informs his creation. To that end, Vetro has been endowed with the ability to generate "new expansions." In other words, he is sentient and can upgrade himself. One of his first moves is to give himself a new "multilayered emotional matrix," and it doesn't take long for Vetro to exhibit somewhat cunning traits — he can be both obsequious and creepy.

The writer-director Christopher Morvant's most distinctive spin on the thriving A.I. genre was to make Vetro a cartoonish animatronic/puppet character that looks goofy yet comes across as unsettling, especially since Morvant often shows him in startling close-ups. The movie is, admittedly, overlong, especially since it's essentially a talkathon between Carl and Vetro, and the writing is not quite strong enough to sustain the more complex philosophical issues it raises. But "Life Cycle" does have a few surprises in store, and Morvant's sui generis world nimbly juxtaposes technologies that feel pulled from completely different eras. Pretty good for a movie shot in a garage in a month.

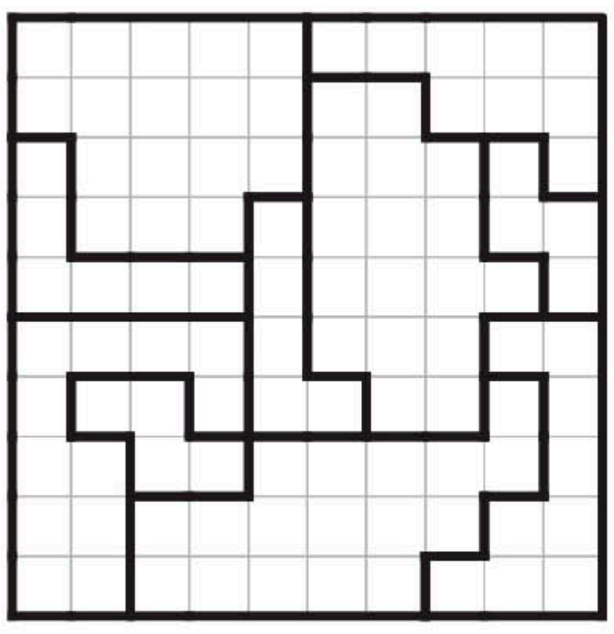
'Dry Ground Burning'

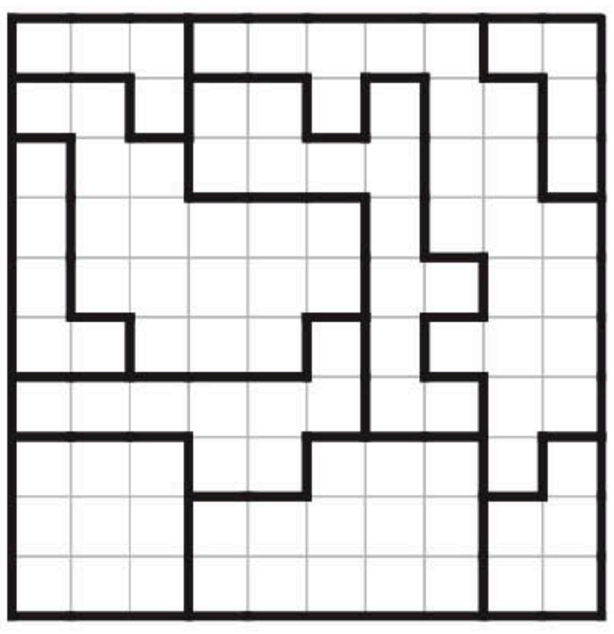
Rent or buy it on Amazon.

Set in an impoverished Sol Nascente, in Brazil, this film by Joana Pimenta and Adirley Queirós is tough to categorize. "Dry Ground Burning" follows the activities of a female gang, led by Chitara (Joana Darc Furtado), that steals oil and resells it as gas to groups of bikers. Add to that mix the reentry into society of Chitara's half sister, Léa (Léa Alves da Silva), who is newly released from prison. In conventional hands, these could be an action-packed thriller's starting point. Pimenta and Queirós go down a completely different road, both in form and in content.

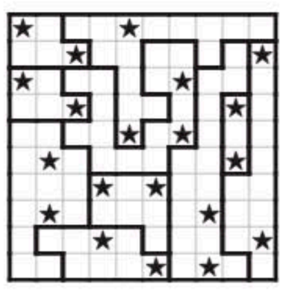
We are in a dystopian pamphlet targeting the far-right policies of Jair Bolsonaro, the authoritarian former president of Brazil, that were devastating for the poor, the minorities and the outcasts at the movie's heart. All of this is put together with a documentarylike matter-of-factness, amplified by a cast made up of non- or semiprofessional actors. When scenes set during, say, a raucous bus trip or a religious ceremony hypnotically go on and on as if in real time, you might wonder if Frederick Wiseman had suddenly gone to Brazil. Tip: Go with the flow — you can't rush life, politics or this film.

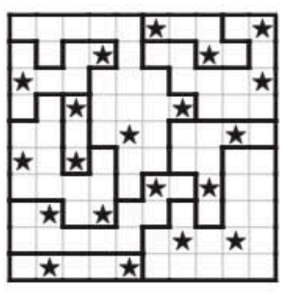
Two Not Touch





ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES





Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.

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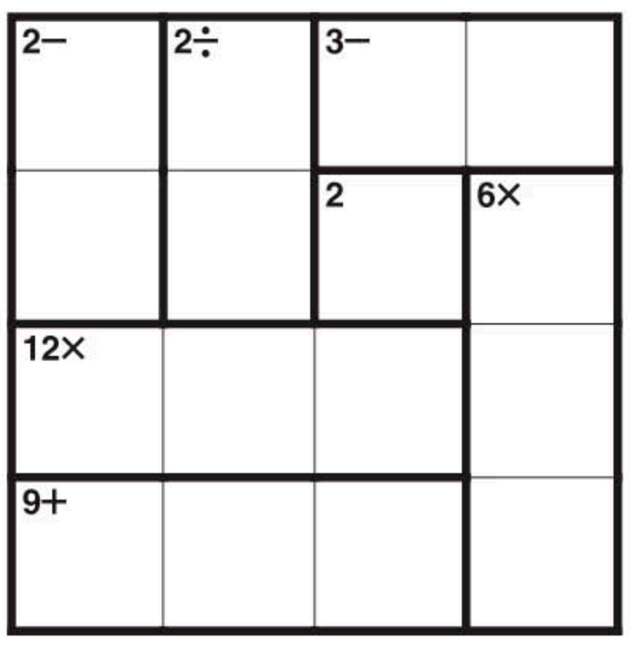
Cryptogram

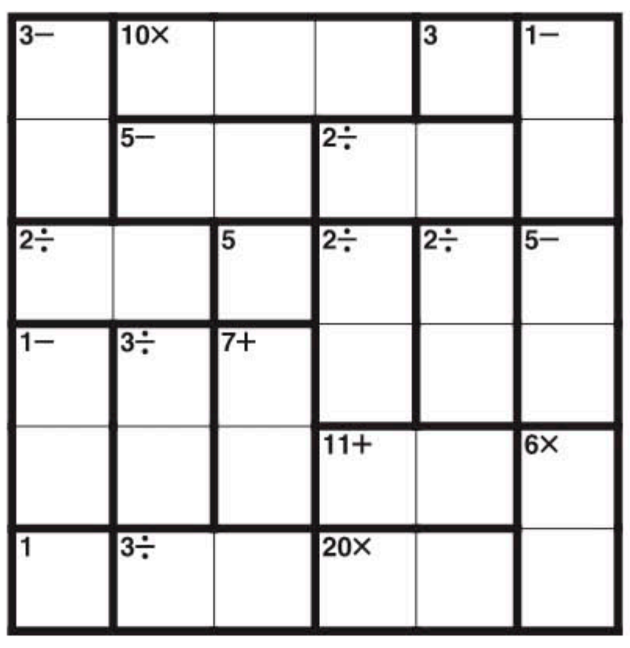
Q HSG OR CXOQY OG LSJE GCYYQRH XC ASL GS JCOU XONT WOKELOJU. QG GZJRCU SZG GS WC TNOX.

PUZZLE BY BEN BASS

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 1. Brush 2. Comb 3. Cream 4. Shaver 5. Sink 6. Shower 7. Soap 8. Towel

KenKen





ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES

1	2	4	3
3	1	2	4
2	4	3	1
4	3	1	2

4	5	2	6	1	3
2	4	3	5	6	1
1	6	5	3	2	4
5	1	6	4	3	2
6	3	1	2	4	5
3	2	4	1	5	6

Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

For more games: www.nytimes.com/games

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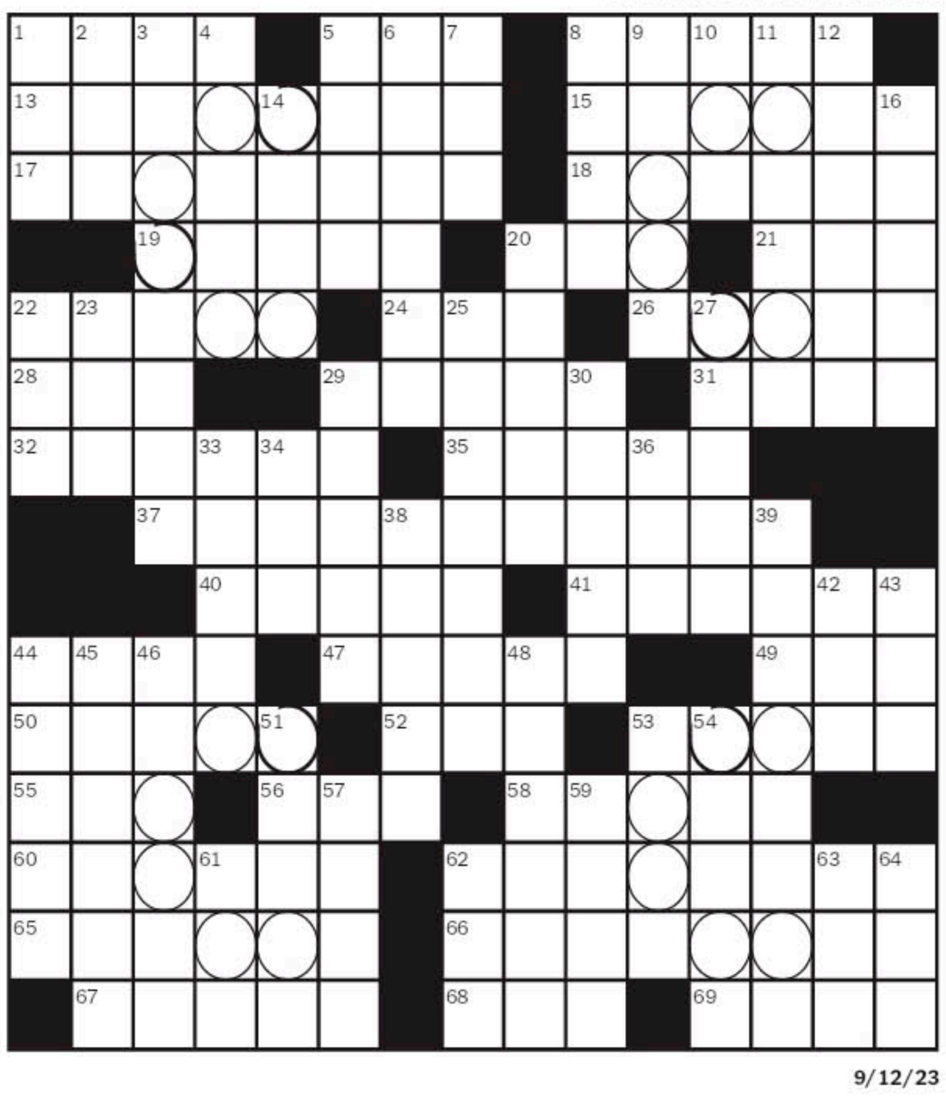
Crossword | Edited by Will Shortz

PUZZLE BY ELLA DERSHOWITZ



9/12/23

ACROSS

1 Conks on the head
5 Place for a hot bath
8 Torts students, typically
13 Goes crazy
15 Best-selling Japanese manga and anime series
17 Cuter than cute
18 Summer snack on a stick
19 Alternatives to Asics
20 Theoretical degree
21 Mined stuff
22 Prolonged attack
24 Comedian Wong
26 Like tridents and forks
28 Parrot
29 Sister brand of Crest
31 Loch ___ monster
32 Felt-tipped writing implement
35 Apt name for a rock climber
37 Aquatic denizen ... or a phonetic hint to this puzzle's circled words
40 Hawaiian beach bashes
41 Dental coat
44 Successful search results
47 Rude omissions
49 Toilet paper specification
50 Challenge for a translator, perhaps
52 4.0 is a great one
53 Certain belly button
55 Oscar, Golden Globe and Grammy winner Batiste
56 Income source for Meta
58 Unwashed
60 Turkey's capital
62 Braggarts
65 Anne ___ (figure in Broadway's "Six")
66 Release of confidential material to the media
67 Brusque
68 British singer/songwriter Rita
69 Sicilian smoker

DOWN

1 Deg. for a creative type
2 ___-fashioned (cocktail)
3 Trailblazers
4 Parsley portion
5 Drink brand with a lizard logo
6 Source of waves in space
7 Chowed down
8 "I've got this"
9 Opposite of day, in Germany
10 Before, in poetry
11 Patti in the American Theater Hall of Fame
12 Mall map listings
14 Japanese rice wine
16 Slanted columns?
20 Nabisco wafer brand
22 Actor Waterston
23 Hoppy quaff, in brief
25 Gets ready to skate
27 Prefix with structure
29 Killer whales
30 Chomps on
33 Ashton Kutcher's "That '70s Show" role
34 ___ de vie
36 "Sounds like a blast!"
38 Ladder levels
39 Mathematical grouping that contains no elements
42 Yale student
43 Soapmaking ingredient
44 Muslim head scarf
45 Huffy response to an untrue accusation
46 Little bell's sound
48 Pester persistently
51 "The Bells of St. ___"
53 Table scraps
54 Of practical value
57 Almost any character in "Hamlet"
59 Corn Belt state
61 ___ Lingus
62 Musician Brian
63 Color akin to khaki
64 Precursor to rocksteady

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

N	A	C	H	O		S	L	R			T	S	A	I
A	C	H	E	D		C	O	A	T		A	T	I	T
B	R	E	A	D	D	O	U	G	H		M	I	R	O
S	E	N	D	S	U	P		E	E	R	I	L	Y	
			R	A	C	E	S		P	I	L	L		
A	L	B	E	R	T		P	A	I	D		I	R	A
T	E	A	S	E		T	R	I	T	E		R	A	G
B	E	L	T		W	H	I	M	S		T	I	V	O
A	C	L		G	A	I	N	S		L	A	S	E	R
T	H	O		R	I	N	G		S	E	L	E	N	A
		O	B	I	T		S	H	A	N	K			
	U	N	I	D	O	S		O	N	S	T	A	G	E
S	N	I	T		U	P	A	N	D	C	O	M	E	R
K	I	S	S		T	A	L	E		A	M	O	N	G
I	T	T	Y			S	L	Y		P	E	S	T	O

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Met Commissions An Opera About Abducted Children

Ukrainian mothers whose offspring were taken during the war with Russia inspired the work.

By JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ

A story that conveys 'the scale of the horror that the Ukrainians face and the courage and resilience of its people.'

The Metropolitan Opera announced on Monday that it had commissioned an opera about Russia's abduction and deportation of thousands of Ukrainian children. It is the latest action by the company to show support for war-torn Ukraine.

The work, which will be written by the Ukrainian composer Maxim Kolomiiets, with a libretto by the American playwright George Brant, tells the story of a mother who makes a long and perilous trip to rescue her daughter, who is being held at a camp inside Crimea.

While the characters in the opera are fictional, the story is based on real-life accounts by Ukrainian mothers who have described making the harrowing 3,000-mile journey from Ukraine into Russian-occupied territory, and back again, to recover their children from the custody of the Russian authorities.

Peter Gelb, the Met's general manager, said the aim was to "support Ukraine culturally in its fight for freedom."

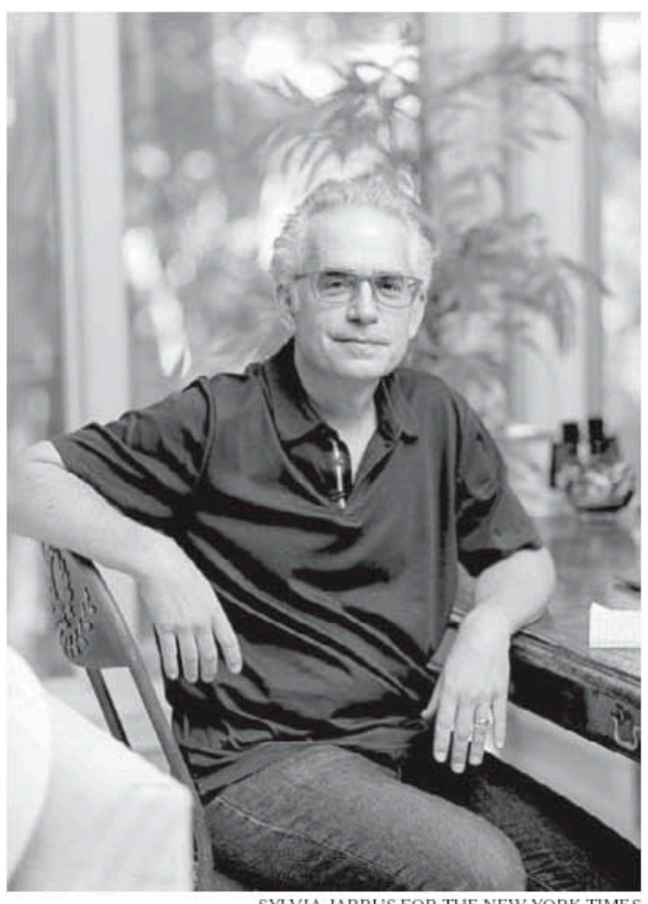
"I can't think of a better way of doing that," he said, "than having an opera that actually documents an aspect of the war that underscores the individual heroism of the Ukrainian people in the face of the most dire and horrible atrocities and circumstances."

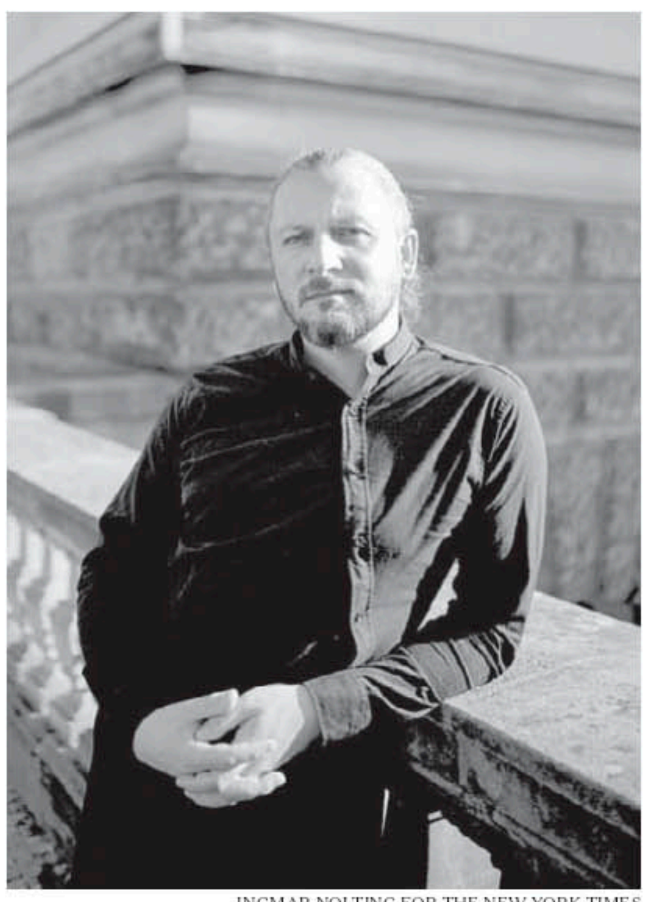
Kolomiiets, 42, a composer and oboist who has written two operas and an array of orchestral, chamber and solo works, said that he felt "a responsibility to create something great and to show something very dignified about my country."

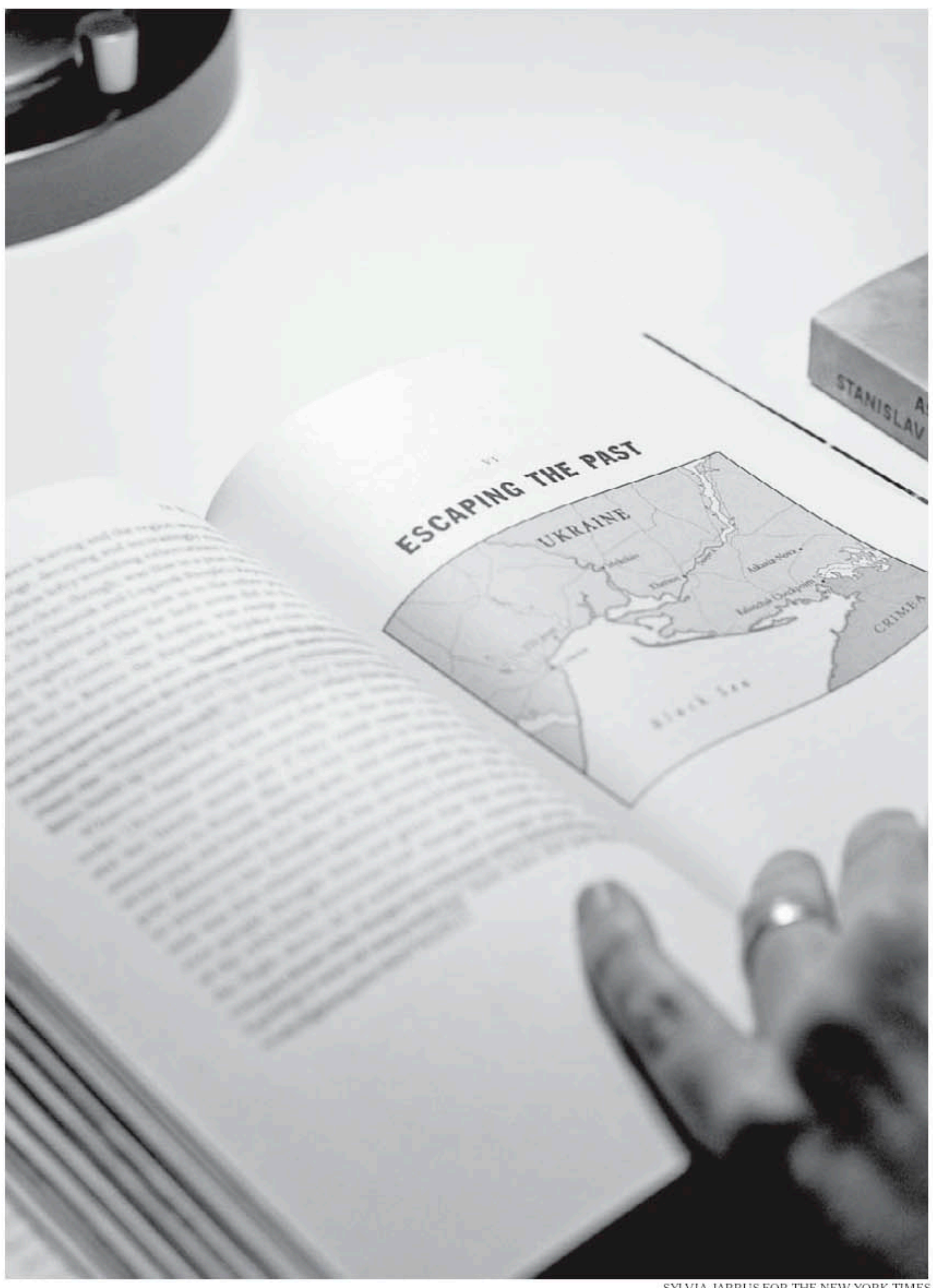
"The objective is not only to draw attention to Ukraine but also to shed light on similar situations around the world where mothers endure immense suffering while trying to protect their children," he said. "I want people to empathize with this pain and use any opportunity they have, at various levels, to prevent this kind of pain from happening."

Brant, who is known for "Grounded," an acclaimed Off Broadway play that the Met is also turning into an opera, said that he hoped to "contribute in a small way to Ukraine's cause as it faces this staggering challenge to its existence."

Writing and staging new operas takes time. The Ukrainian opera, which the Met hopes will come to its stage by 2027 or 2028, is the latest display of the company's support for Kyiv. The Met was one of the first cultural organizations to announce after Russia's invasion that it would not engage performers or institutions that supported President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, and it cut ties with one of its biggest stars, the Russian soprano Anna Netrebko.


SYLVIA JARRUS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES


INGMAR NOLTING FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



SYLVIA JARRUS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Top left, the playwright George Brant, who is writing the libretto. Below him is the Ukrainian composer Maxim Kolomiiets, who is writing the opera. Above right, Brant has been conducting research for the libretto. The Met hopes the opera will come to the stage by 2027 or 2028.

Since then, the Met has helped create the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra, an ensemble of refugees who fled the war and artists who stayed behind, which has led two international tours. The company has also staged concerts in support of Ukraine and hung banners forming the Ukrainian flag across the exterior of the theater.

The opera is being developed as part of a joint commissioning program by the Met and Lincoln Center Theater, which began in 2006.

The idea for commissioning an opera by a Ukrainian composer came during a meeting last year between Gelb and Ukraine's first lady, Olena Zelenska. The Canadian Ukrainian conductor Keri-Lynn Wilson, who is married to Gelb and leads the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra, was also present. Ukrainian cultural officials spread word of the opportunity and received 72 applications from composers, which were vetted by the Met.

Gelb said that the Met had selected Kolomiiets because of his experience in opera as well as his deep understanding of Ukrainian musical traditions. Zelenska praised the project, saying in a statement that "the pain of Ukrainian mothers that the world should hear will be heard."

Russia's abduction of Ukrainian children has received wide attention, especially after the International Criminal Court earlier this year issued an arrest warrant for Putin for war crimes, saying he bore criminal responsibility for the children's treatment. The court also issued a warrant for Maria Lvova-Belova, Russia's commissioner for children's rights, who has been the public face of a Kremlin-sponsored program in which Ukrainian children and teenagers have been taken to Russia.

Brant said he had been moved after reading news reports about Ukrainian mothers. The opera will feature workers from Save Ukraine, one of several charity groups helping mothers make the trek to find their children.

"I feel like there's thousands of stories that could be told and should be told about this conflict, but this one seemed to convey both the scale of the horror that the Ukrainians face and the courage and resilience of its people," Brant said.

Kolomiiets, who has been living in Germany since last year, said he expected his score would be "gentle, naïve, emotional and even dramatic." He said that he tries to envision a peaceful and thriving Ukraine.

"The story has a happy ending," he said of the opera. "And it's really important for us to have a happy ending right now."

Anna Tsybko contributed research.

A Film Revisits New York as It Teetered on the Edge of Ruin

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

tional hours, he said in an interview: "I was very moved to see his charm and his intellect right there on the surface. I think he would be really proud of the film. He might think there's not enough of him in it, and he might be right."

The prize, awarded by the Better Angels Society, the Library of Congress and the Crimson Lion/Lavine Family Foundation, and funded by Jeannie and Jonathan Lavine, includes a $200,000 grant for final production and distribution of the film, a sum that, the award-winning documentarian Ken Burns recalled, was more than the entire budget for his first film, on the Brooklyn Bridge, which was nominated for an Academy Award in 1982.

"Drop Dead City" serves as a vivid reminder for today's negativists of how bad the bad old days were. The contrasting scenes are poignant: a theater poster for "Man of La Mancha" — the Impossible Dream — and streets clogged with cabs juxtaposed with the carcasses of burned-out buildings, abandoned skeletal public works, graffiti-shrouded subway cars, and mobs of justifiably choleric municipal workers whose promise of lifetime civil service job security was suddenly jeopardized. Its protagonists were mostly men with long sideburns in smoke-filled rooms, palpably fearful over the uncharted consequences if the city could no longer fool some of the people all of the time to pay its bills.

Who would have first claim? The bondholders from whom the city had borrowed? Or the police officers, firefighters, sanitation workers and teachers on whom New Yorkers depended every day? Or the beneficiaries of public assistance who depended on the city?

And who would bear the blame? Former Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller, whose worthies conceived of "moral obligation" bonds to enable more borrowing for good causes? Former Mayor Robert F. Wagner, who was reelected in 1961 after granting the unions collective bargaining rights? His successor, John V. Lindsay, undone by the cost of good intentions? Or his successor, Abraham D. Beame, who had warned against fiscal gimmickry when he was the city's comptroller but sanctioned it anyway by voting for the unbalanced budgets, only to find that the buck stopped with him when he was elected mayor?

WILLIAM E. SAURO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Felix G. Rohatyn, who helped rescue New York City from insolvency in the 1970s, was the father of a director of the film "Drop Dead City — New York on the Brink in 1975."

And who should bear the brunt of the sacrifice? Public officials had long maintained low mass transit fares, free tuition at City University and other services, and had granted organized labor generous benefits not only to get re-elected, but to preserve the city's legacy as a global beacon of opportunity. Bankers should have known that the city was selling tax anticipation notes without having the slightest notion of how much tax revenue was anticipated, even as they reaped hefty commissions on each borrowing that sent the city deeper into debt.

"They made the accounting sexy," Burns said of the filmmakers. "They made the people who get dismissed human and dimensional. The headline became the haiku of the fiscal crisis."

Hundreds of films were submitted to the Better Angels Society, a nonprofit organization whose goal is to educate Americans about their history through documentaries. It winnowed the submissions to six and presented two to Burns and Carla Hayden, the Librarian of Congress, who selected the winner. The runner-up was "The Disappearance of Miss Scott," directed by Nicole London, which recounts the story of the jazz pianist and civil rights pioneer Hazel Scott, who went into exile during the Red Scare of the 1950s.

The mid-1970s evoked by "Drop Dead City" are even more distant from today's audiences than the ancient history of the 1929 stock market crash was from New Yorkers who lived through the city's fiscal crisis. But, as Hayden explained, what gives the film vitality and relevance is that "it puts history at the forefront."

"Drop Dead City" deftly melds archival footage of frustrated and gravely conflicted negotiators, ordinary New Yorkers and aggrieved rank-and-file union members with candid reflections by the surviving protagonists. Unfortunately some, like former Deputy Mayor John Zuccotti, didn't survive long enough to be interviewed on video. (Zuccotti died a day after the filmmakers spoke with him off-camera.)

Viewers might also have welcomed more of Felix Rohatyn's pithy observations. (He once likened default to "someone stepping into a tepid bath and slashing his wrists — you might not feel yourself dying, but that's what would happen.")

The city came so close to default that a declaration was signed by Mayor Beame's shaky hand, but never invoked; it later hung in the home office of the New York corporate lawyer Ira Millstein.

Asked at the time, though, whether an agreement with the municipal unions and the State Legislature to fend off bankruptcy would survive, Felix Rohatyn replied: "I don't give odds any more. I think it has to work."

But Rohatyn was aware of the costs, predicting that the sacrifices inflicted to satisfy the banks and the Ford administration would mean that even if New York survived, "this city will be a much lesser place."

Yost, the film's co-director, explained why, even though New York remains very much alive, "Drop Dead City" is still very relevant.

"Intellectually, it's resonant at a time when we're all at each other's throats," he said. "That was a moment when it could have gotten ugly and rude like New York, but seemingly irreconcilable things came together to keep the city from going over a cliff. To me that holds a lot of lessons for us today."

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Your daily guide to theater

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EAMON QUEENEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

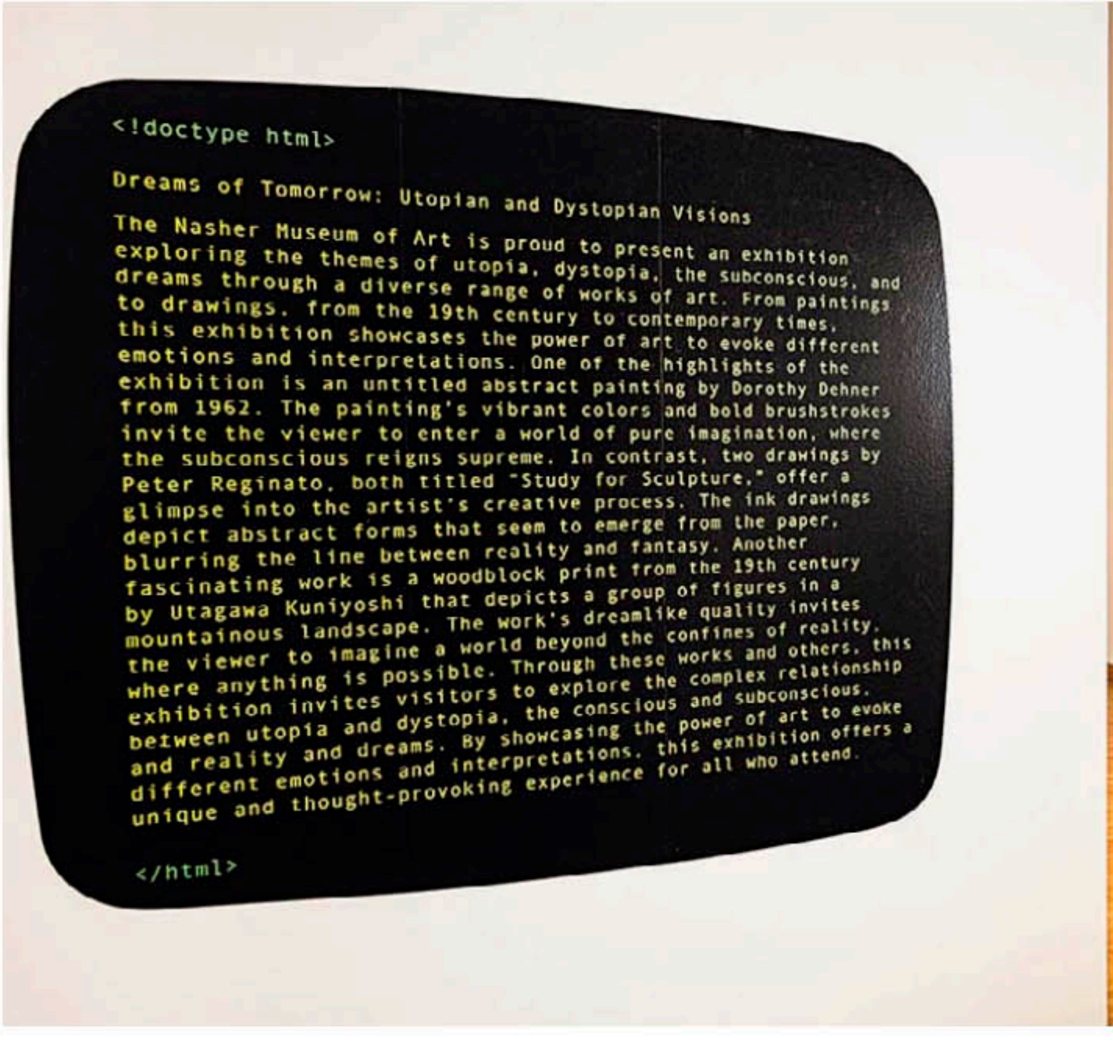
Giving ChatGPT Free Rein to Curate an Art Show

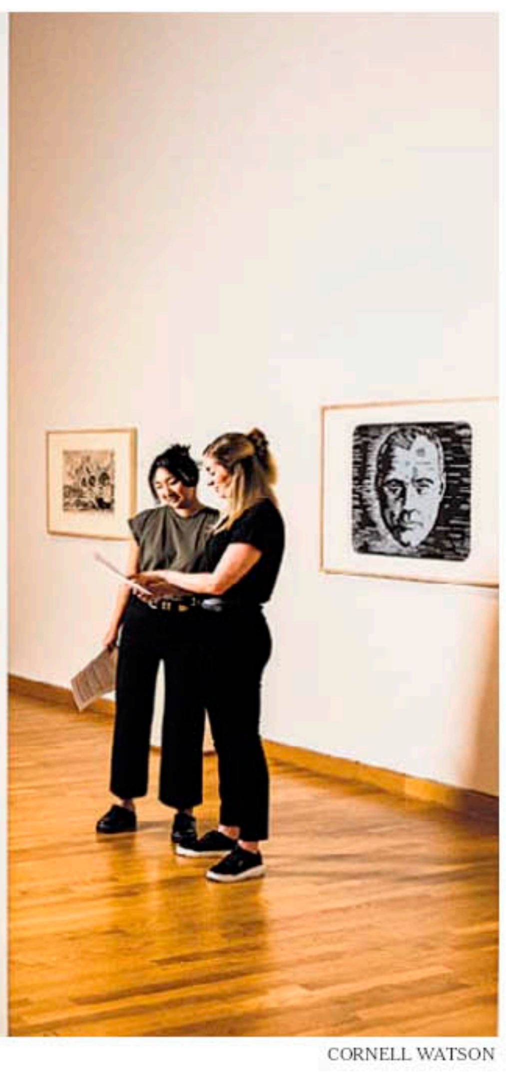
At Duke, A.I. picked surprise works, but faltered on some titles and descriptions.

By ZACHARY SMALL

SALVADOR DALÍ, FUNDACIÓ GALA-SALVADOR DALÍ, ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY, VIA THE NASHER MUSEUM OF ART AT DUKE UNIVERSITY

VIA NASHER MUSEUM OF ART AT DUKE UNIVERSITY




CORNELL WATSON

Marshall Price was joking when he told employees at Duke University's Nasher Museum of Art that artificial intelligence could organize their next exhibition. As its chief curator, he was short-staffed and facing a surprise gap in his fall programming schedule; the comment was supposed to cut the tension of a difficult meeting.

But members of his curatorial staff, who organize the museum's exhibitions, embraced the challenge to see if A.I. could replace them effectively. Professions of all kinds — military pilots, comedians, firefighters, advertisers — are confronting how artificial intelligence will change longstanding responsibilities, as well as assumptions they have about the technology.

"We naïvely thought it would be as easy as plugging in a couple prompts," Price recalled, explaining why curators at the university in North Carolina have spent the past six months teaching ChatGPT how to do their jobs.

The experiment's results were unveiled on Saturday when the Nasher opened the exhibition "Act as if You Are a Curator," which runs through mid-January. It is one of the first examples of A.I. organizing an art exhibition, at a time when museums are redefining their relationship with technology.

Whether the exhibition is considered a curatorial success depends on one's vantage point. ChatGPT, a prominent chatbot developed by the company OpenAI, was able to identify themes and develop a checklist of 21 artworks owned by the museum, along with directions for where to place them in the galleries. But the tool lacked the nuanced expertise of its human colleagues, producing a very small show with questionable inclusions, mistitled objects and errant informational texts.

Museum employees and researchers at Duke are debating whether the show is comparable to others or simply considered "good enough" for a computer. When asked if the ChatGPT experiment resulted in a good exhibition, Price paused before laughing.

"I would say it's an eclectic show," he said. "Visually speaking it will be quite disjointed, even if it's thematically cohesive."

The process began with Mark Olson, a professor of visual studies at Duke, who worked through the technical challenges of fine-tuning ChatGPT to process the museum's collection of nearly 14,000 objects. A curatorial assistant, Julianne Miao, explored the possibilities of that system in some of the first conversations with the chatbot.

"Act as if you are a curator," Miao instructed. "Using your data set, select works of art related to the themes of dystopia, utopia, dreams and subconscious."

Those specific themes came after an earlier conversation in which the machine generated ideas for exhibitions about social justice and environmentalism. But its most prevalent responses were on topics like the subconscious, and the human curators directed ChatGPT to continue developing those ideas. The A.I. named its project "Dreams of Tomorrow: Utopian and Dystopian Visions."

The process was not altogether different from a typical curatorial brainstorming session, but the chatbot could search through the entire collection within a few seconds and surface artworks that humans might have overlooked.

"The algorithm was adamant that we included several Dalí lithographs on the mysteries of sleep," explained Julia McHugh, a curator and the museum's director of academic initiatives.

Those seemed like a reasonable choice since Salvador Dalí is associated with Surrealism and the artistic interpretation of dreams. But it was unclear why ChatGPT was pulling other objects into the exhibition, including two stone figures and a ceramic vase reflecting Mesoamerica. The curator said the vase was in particularly bad condition and not something she would typically put on display.

ChatGPT, McHugh said, might have picked up information from keywords included in the digital records for those objects, describing them as accompaniments in the afterlife. However, it also incorrectly titled the stone figures as "Utopia" and "Dystopia" and named the Mayan vase "Consciousness," which made all three perfect candidates for the exhibition.

Top, from left, Julia McHugh, Marshall Price, Mark Olson and Julianne Miao, who oversaw the exhibition at Duke University's Nasher Museum of Art. Center, included were "Obsession of the Heart (The World)," by Salvador Dalí (1976), left, and a stone figure from Mesoamerica. Above, from left, ChatGPT wrote the introductory text, while Miao, left, and McHugh followed its instructions for placing works.

The mistakes demonstrated clear drawbacks of automating the curatorial process. "It made me think really carefully about how we use keywords and describe artworks," McHugh said. "We need to be mindful about bias and outdated systems of cataloging."

Chatbots like ChatGPT — driven by A.I. technology that guesses the next word in a sequence based on an immense reservoir of human-created data — are a long way from handling the complex tasks of managing loans from other institutions, scouring archives for primary sources and checking facts. Efforts to automate curation are still in their infancy, a thought experiment for human curators to reconsider their approaches from a machine's perspective.

Last year's Bucharest Biennale in Romania was organized by Jarvis, an artificial intelligence program that selected a dozen artists after assigning "score values" based on their popularity and how they fit into the exhibition's core theme of popular culture. A year earlier, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Liverpool Biennial commissioned a project, "The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine," which used a tool developed by OpenAI to generate fictitious artist biographies and absurd curatorial statements — a satire of the clichéd artspeak plaguing real biennials.

"You really get a portrait of the art world," said Christiane Paul, a Whitney curator behind the project. The tool, she said, quickly identified rote patterns in exhibition texts at odds with curatorial goals to show the real diversity of the global arts scene.

Roderick Schrock, the director of Eyebeam, a nonprofit center for art and technology, is intrigued by A.I. curation but said his own experiments have ended with very simplistic results. He has warned his digital art curation students at the School of Visual Arts in New York against using chatbots just to "blind people with science."

For the Nasher exhibition, ChatGPT generated descriptions for the artworks it selected as well as an adequate introductory text of about 230 words.

"From paintings to drawings, from the 19th century to contemporary times, this exhibition showcases the power of art to evoke different emotions and interpretations," the A.I. wrote. "One of the highlights of the exhibition is an untitled abstract painting by Dorothy Dehner from 1962. The painting's vibrant colors and bold brushstrokes invite the viewer to enter a world of pure imagination."

But many of the chatbot's descriptions had bromidic taglines like "experience the art" and "immerse yourself." The human curators added their own commentary on the labels to point out its quirks and inaccuracies.

Despite the errors, some Nasher curators said it was easy to see how A.I. could support them. "It was a new lens through which we could see and understand our collections," said Price, the chief curator.

The speed at which ChatGPT could draft an exhibition and even suggest mood lighting for the galleries would help them brainstorm, Price said. And even some of its mistakes were instructive, if they reflected human errors in the museum's online catalog that would need correcting.

Other members of the exhibition team were more concerned.

"I worry not so much that ChatGPT can do the job as curator," said Olson, the visual studies expert, "but in the context of dwindling resources for the arts, it will be seen as good enough."

Good enough — and cheap. The Nasher Museum said that developing its version of ChatGPT cost only $10.71 in technology expenses. At that price, it was easier to forgive the machine's mistakes, so long as there was a human curator somewhere to correct them.

For the time being, most large institutions are not pursuing exhibitions curated by artificial intelligence. "Alas, no curabot projects at MoMA, yet!" said Paola Antonelli, the museum's senior curator for the department of architecture and design. But they are watching to see how experiments at smaller museums like the Nasher go.

"The issue you run into from the start is creating an echo chamber," Paul, the Whitney curator, said about the concept of automated curating. "This is not going to suggest anything revolutionary because it's just drawing on what is out there. And the lowest common denominator is what's out there."

MARK ELZEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

An Office Sisterhood Doesn't Quite Click

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

pany where she works. Her joy at discovering that a newly hired assistant is also Black is short-lived when that employee, Hazel-May McCall (Ashleigh Murray), quickly becomes her adversary.

There is a parallel plot tying Nella's present-day woes to a mysterious incident between two Black women at the same company nearly four decades earlier, as well as increasingly sinister occurrences in the office: flickering lights, threatening notes, glitchy computers depicting unnerving scenes, shadowy figures darting down the halls.

The show prompts viewers to wonder what's more chilling: The uncanny notion of a supernatural office-wide conspiracy? Or the very real knowledge that you can never know whom to trust because racism, either casual or systemic, could be lurking around the next cubicle corner?

"We really wanted for it to be unclear what is the actual scary part," Harris said in a late-August phone interview. "Obviously, there's the twist that's happening, but also, it's being gaslit in your office!"

A lifelong fan of true-crime and horror, the novelist was eager to make her first foray into TV writing (she co-wrote the pilot and wrote the penultimate episode) by channeling some of her eerie favorites, including "The Twilight Zone" and "Black Mirror." She and Rashida Jones — the pilot co-writer and an executive producer — also took cues from their mutual must-watch show, "Severance."

"The way that they nailed office life — the mundane parts of it, but also the quirky parts of it — that was something that excited me," Harris said of the Apple TV+ drama. She said she preferred creepiness that "starts off in a very everyday kind of place, but then slowly, it becomes more and more clear that there's something off."

Harris, like her main character, hails from a mostly white Connecticut town and was the only Black woman in her department at Penguin Random House before quitting in 2019 to write full time. She said the show's writers — most are Black women — bonded by sharing past experiences of being overstressed and undervalued as an "only."

"Having those conversations really early on allowed us as a room to start from this place of our own relationships with the material," Harris said. She added: "I really felt like we were trust-falling, to where I got to feel comfortable giving my baby over. At that point, I was like, 'This is so much bigger than me now.'"

Nella's plight will feel familiar to any viewer who's ever been blindsided by a tone-deaf "Heyyy, *gurrrl!*" in the office kitchen. You can practically see her ulcer forming as she fends off her wannabe ally co-worker, Sophie (Kate Owens), while contending with the canine commands — "Nella, come! Sit!" — of her boss, Vera (Bellamy Young).

When she learns about the new hire, the perpetually uneasy Nella gets a visible serotonin boost from the chance to gab about natural hair care products and H.B.C.U. homecoming parties. But soon the effortlessly cool Hazel seems to have the higher-ups, particularly the company founder, Richard Wagner (Eric McCormack), eating out of one hand while she is holding Nella back with the other.

Amid all the mind games, the show also mocks modern "diversity matters" pageantry while suggesting with its earlier subplot that for all of the rhetoric, the 21st-century office environment isn't too terribly different from that of the 1980s.

"I felt like every Black woman I know could identify with some aspect of the book," said Jordan Reddout, who is the series's showrunner along with her longtime creative partner, Gus Hickey. Reddout said she "made every woman in my family read it — my dad, too."

"I am a Black woman who was a very serious classical musician for a long time and then went to Harvard and then went into sit-

HULU

Above, Zakiya Dalila Harris helped to adapt her novel "The Other Black Girl" into a Hulu series. Sinclair Daniel, far left, and Ashleigh Murray star in the series.

Mind games, sinister occurrences and short-lived joy are part of a novel-to-TV adaptation.

com writing," she said. "So I really identified with Nella's journey of being 'the only one.'"

(The phone interview with Reddout and Hickey was coordinated through their personal representation, not Hulu. The Writers Guild strike rules prohibit members from promoting shows at the behest of the studios and their subsidiaries.)

From Hickey's perspective, there's also a "universality to the story in terms of posing this question of, How much of yourself are you willing to sacrifice to succeed in a competitive environment?"

"And for marginalized people," he continued, "it's in a competitive environment that is set up for people who don't look like you to win."

The duo leaned on their sitcom background ("Mixed-ish," "Grown-ish") in order to inject some levity into their cultural critique. (Having written for "Will & Grace," this is their second time working with McCormack.)

"Our style has always been: The world is sad enough as it is, you have to laugh at it or you will not survive," Hickey said. "I think with this show, as serious a subject matter as it has, it almost necessitates having a point of view that has some humor. So we were really conscious of that with Nella; we wanted her to be a funny audience surrogate who could see how ridiculous both the reality and the fantasy of this world was."

Reddout said they stayed true to the spirit of the novel and even pulled certain scenes directly from the page. "I think the places where we do stray from the book are only deepening the characters and rounding out their stories," she said.

Harris supports that approach. For the series, she was keen to flesh out the book's antagonist and chip away at the "good vs. bad" dichotomy between the two women.

"It's more rounded out in the show than it was in the book, to be honest," she said. "With Hazel, writing her in the book, I just thought of her as more of a robot that's been conditioned by the world to be this way but not necessarily still holding onto humanity. In the show Hazel has a soul, and Ashleigh had a huge hand in shaping what that soul would look and feel like."

Another key difference between the series and the book is their divergent endings — without giving them away, each leaves you wondering what happens next, though for very different reasons. Neither the author nor the showrunners would speculate on the likelihood of a second season, though all three acknowledged that enough unexplored original material and potential new story lines existed to sustain one.

In the meantime, Harris is busy writing her second book, which she says is not a sequel but is "still horror, still Black people." She believes the genre is well suited to telling Black stories, so much so that she used a quote from the author and horror noir expert Tananarive Due as the epigraph for "The Other Black Girl": "Black history is Black horror." But her attraction to the otherworldly runs deeper than just that.

"I joke that I've always been drawn to horror because I've always been the kind of person who imagines all the ways things can go wrong," she said. "For me, watching and writing horror is the perfect place to put my own personal anxieties and insecurities."

"I'm pinching myself," Rachel McAdams said of performing on Broadway. She will take on the lead role in Amy Herzog's 2017 drama next spring.

Rachel McAdams to Star in 'Mary Jane' on Broadway

By MICHAEL PAULSON

The film star Rachel McAdams will make her Broadway debut next spring in an acclaimed and heart-wrenching play about a mother caring for a small child with a serious illness.

McAdams will star in "Mary Jane," a drama by Amy Herzog that debuted at Yale Repertory Theater in 2017 and was followed by an Off Broadway run at New York Theater Workshop that same year. In The New York Times, the critic Jesse Green called the play "a heartbreaker for anyone human" and "the most profound and harrowing of Ms. Herzog's many fine plays."

McAdams, who became famous playing Regina George in the 2004 movie "Mean Girls," performed regularly onstage while growing up in Canada and studied theater at York University in Toronto. But she has not performed onstage professionally since she was a student. In a telephone interview, she said her initial career aspirations were to perform as a theater actor.

"I had dreams of going to the Stratford Festival in Canada, and hadn't really entertained Broadway — that was so far off, and even now I'm pinching myself," she said. "I've been looking for a play forever, but kind of casually — not fully committed to it — and this came along, I read it, and I just was so taken with it."

She said she found the play "beautifully written" and "couldn't stop thinking about it. It was already inside of me."

"It's shedding light on the difficulties, but also the resiliency, of families with children with special needs," she added. "There's actually a lot of comedy to the piece as well — she's drawn an amazingly positive, resilient character in Mary Jane, and really well-drawn, supporting characters around her."

McAdams was nominated for an Academy Award for the 2015 film "Spotlight." She also starred in the 2004 film adaptation of "The Notebook"; a musical adaptation of that same story is scheduled to open on Broadway in March.

McAdams said her decision to come to Broadway was not related to the dual strikes by screenwriters and actors that have largely idled Hollywood. She said that she had committed to "Mary Jane" before the strikes began. And though apprehensive about returning to the stage, McAdams is also looking forward to it.

"There's no editor; you're really so naked and vulnerable," she said. "I hope my training will support me, but it was such a long time ago."

"I think it might be like riding a bike," she added. However, she said, "there's a little bit of the unknown about it. And I think also just having emotional stamina. You really don't know until you're there if you're going to be able to fill your vessel up enough to keep you going. So it's just all those 'I won't know until I get there' things, but I'm excited to do the work."

The Off Broadway production won three Obie Awards: for Herzog's playwriting, for direction by Anne Kauffman, and for a lead performance by Carrie Coon. There have since been several productions at regional theaters; one is running in Santa Rosa, Calif.

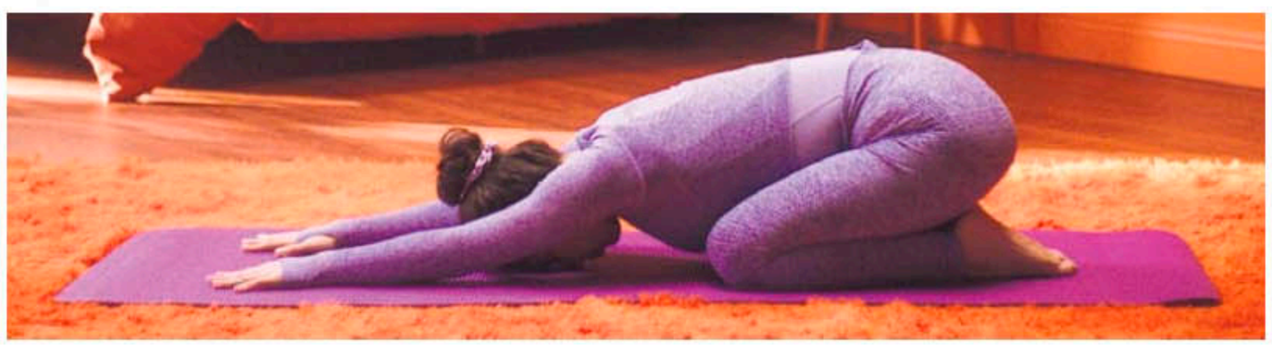
The nonprofit Manhattan Theater Club will present the Broadway production, also directed by Kauffman, at its Samuel J. Friedman Theater. Previews are to begin on April 2; an opening date and the names of the other cast members have not been announced.

Herzog, whose play "4000 Miles" was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 2013, has recently turned her attention to revising classic works: She adapted Henrik Ibsen's "A Doll's House" for a Broadway production starring Jessica Chastain and Arian Moayed that ran this year, and she is adapting Ibsen's "An Enemy of the People" for a Broadway production planning to open next spring with Jeremy Strong in the title role.

3 EPIDEMIOLOGY
Hope grows for the increasing number of older Americans who have H.I.V.

3 OUT THERE
Don’t expect a ‘theory of everything’ to explain everything about cosmic history.

7 WELL
After waking but before scrolling, start the day with seven yoga poses.



‘Zombie Trout’ Unsettle Montana

MATTHEW HAMON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Warming waters and other factors appear to be causing alarmingly low numbers of the state’s renowned fish.

By JIM ROBBINS

WISE RIVER, MONT. — Since the Fellin family founded the Big Hole Lodge in the 1980s to take people fly fishing on the Big Hole River, they have seen significant changes to the cobble-and-boulder-studded freestone trout stream.

For as long as anyone can remember, this river originating high in the Beaverhead mountain range had been clogged with ice and deep snow every winter, preventing the start of fishing season until June. Now the river is ice-free by April or May, and the Fellins open the lodge earlier to welcome anglers eager to cast a fly.

The signs of an altered river ecosystem are hard to miss. Clouds of insects no longer hover in such big swarms, and some key species, like the salmonfly, that are critical sources of food for fish are less abundant.

Those shifts are occurring at the same time that state biologists report that the numbers of brown and rainbow trout in the river have plummeted over the past seven years to historic lows, with strange maladies afflicting some of the most sought-after fish.

In addition to their diminishing ranks, “we’ve seen whirling disease, red sores and lesions on fish, and brown trout with cauliflower fungus,” Wade Fellin said over coffee in the dining room of the rustic lodge that serves the business started by his father, Craig, in 1984.

“The brown trout are blind, and still alive,” and referred to as zombie trout, he said.

The rainbow and brown species are the quarry for many who fish, introduced to the region in the 19th century. Twenty years ago, fishery biologists were counting about 3,000 fish per mile along the Big Hole River. That number has dropped precipitously to hundreds in some stretches.

In May, the number of trout per mile fell so low in some sections that the Fellins, other guides and outfitters and business owners formed a nonprofit organization called Save Wild Trout and urged Gov. Greg Gianforte to create a task force in the hope of stemming the deepening losses.

“We have an emergency in southwest Montana’s rivers, and we need to act imme-

CONTINUED ON PAGE D4

Big Hole River near Dewey, Mont., above, has fewer fish these days, and many of those are diseased, right.

TALON MILLER

Risky Dives to the Titanic Were Irresistible

JOEL SAGET/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Paul-Henri Nargeolet in 2013 at the opening of an exhibition in Paris featuring objects that were recovered from the Titanic.

Paul-Henri Nargeolet believed that he could help improve a sub’s novel technology.

By WILLIAM J. BROAD and CATHERINE PORTER

A riddle haunts the Titan disaster. It’s the presence on the doomed craft of Paul-Henri Nargeolet, 77. The Frenchman was one of the world’s great submariners. So why was he, of all people, diving repeatedly to the Titanic on a submersible that many experts saw as a catastrophe waiting to happen?

“It’s a source of great puzzlement,” said Victor L. Vescovo, a sea explorer who hired Mr. Nargeolet to oversee a series of unusually deep dives.

Weeks before the loss of the Titan and its crew in June, Alfred S. McLaren, president emeritus of the Explorers Club, was hosting a dinner party at the Harvard Club of New York City for Mr. Nargeolet and eight other guests when he learned of his friend’s repeated dives aboard the experimental craft.

“I was speechless,” recalled Dr. McLaren, a retired Navy submariner. “I wanted to say, ‘What the hell are you doing?’ ”

Since the June 18 disaster, no single answer to that question has emerged. One theory holds that Mr. Nargeolet believed that

CONTINUED ON PAGE D5

Observatory

FINDINGS, EVENTS AND MORE

SERIOUS GAPES

In the Snake Kingdom, a Small Species Has a Really Big Mouth

Snakes can't really unhinge their jaws, but for some, that doesn't get in the way of swallowing large prey. And new research indicates that, relative to their size, the snakes that can gulp down the largest meals are harmless, three-foot-long egg eaters.

"This particular group of snakes may be No. 1 when it comes to big mouths," said Bruce Jayne, a biology professor at the University of Cincinnati and the author of a paper on the subject published last month in the Journal of Zoology.

The snakes in question, of the genus Dasypeltis (right), are found throughout Africa. They're small, skinny and nearly toothless, since teeth prove to be a hindrance with their food of choice: bird eggs.

To test the snakes' mouth-opening capabilities, Dr. Jayne measured the maximum open mouth area, or "gape," of 15 Dasypeltis gansi egg-eaters and found that Dasypeltis gansi "has spectacularly stretchy skin," enabling it to "add more than 50 percent of that gape area," he said. A previous study by Dr. Jayne showed that Burmese pythons' jaws allow them to expand their gape by 43 percent. Dr. Jayne suspects that Dasypeltis might have the biggest relative gape among snakes.

Bryan Maritz, an associate professor of biology at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, who was not involved with the study, said Dr. Jayne's study stood out because it upended traditional thinking with regard to estimating the size of prey a snake could swallow. "We've said, 'Well, gape is correlated broadly with head length, and so you can measure a snake's head length and you can estimate its gape,'" Dr. Maritz said. "And this study really shows that that's not the case." *KATE GOLEMBIEWSKI*

BRUCE JAYNE

NASA/JPL-CALTECH

FREQUENCY SHIFTS

Mars Lander Serves Up Surprise: The Red Planet Is Spinning Faster

For reasons unknown, the spin of Mars is speeding up.

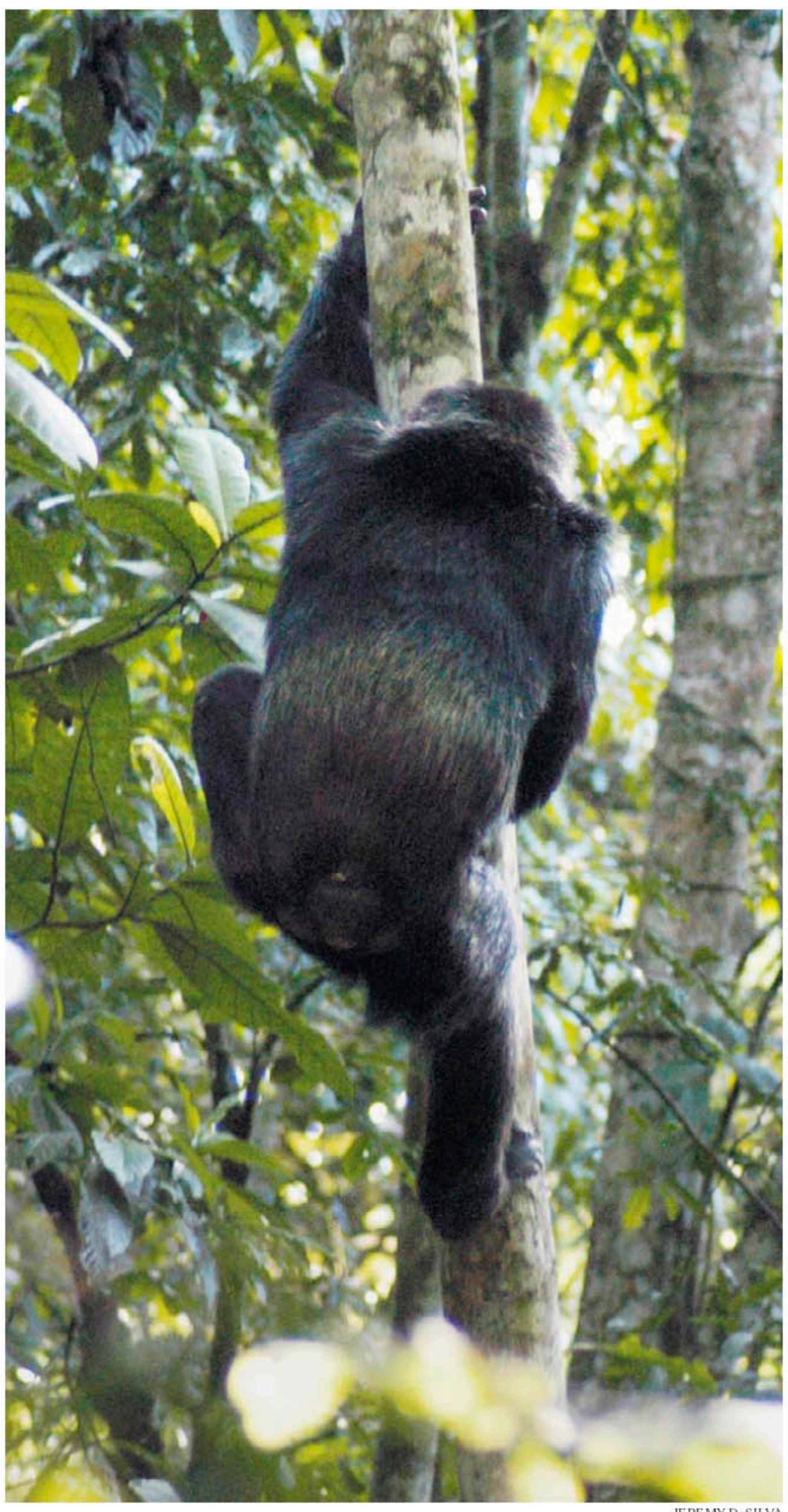
In a paper published in June in the journal Nature, scientists working on NASA's InSight lander mission on Mars reported findings gleaned from tiny shifts in the frequencies of radio transmissions between Earth and InSight.

The measurements showed the expected undulations of the planet's rotation, quickest during winter and summer and slowest during spring and fall, as the distribution of frozen carbon dioxide in the ice caps shifted with the seasons.

When including the NASA Viking mission's Doppler measurements from 47 years ago, the scientists found a slight speeding up in the spin of Mars, which has led to a shortening of a Martian day by about 1.5 millionths of a second per Martian year.

"It was a surprise," Bruce Banerdt, the principal investigator for the InSight mission, said. "We did not expect to see that at all."

It is known that one of the Martian moons, Phobos, is gradually falling, and that indeed is speeding up the rotation of Mars, but that is not big enough to explain what was observed. Dr. Banerdt said the most likely cause was a long-term accumulation of ice at the poles. *KENNETH CHANG*



JEREMY DeSILVA

ARBOREAL ADAPTATIONS

What Goes Up a Tree Must Evolve The Ability to Climb Back Down

Millions of years ago, a simian ancestor decided to climb a tree. Although that ancestral primate must have solved the problem of coming back down, scientists have a lot of work to do in understanding that, and how it relates to the evolution of our species.

"Everyone focuses on climbing up, because that's a difficult thing to do," said Nathaniel Dominy, an evolutionary biologist at Dartmouth. "No one bothered to study climbing down, because gravity doesn't care whether you're climbing up or down."

In a study published last week in the journal Royal Society Open Science, Dr. Dominy and colleagues found that apes and our ancient human ancestors probably developed flexible shoulder and elbow joints to counteract the effects of gravity. The researchers posit that this adaptation persisted even as early humans swapped out trees for grassland habitats, their versatile upper limbs making it possible to forage, hunt and defend.

A key insight came from Mary Joy, a co-author of the study and at the time a Dartmouth undergraduate. She had been watching videos of chimpanzees, which are human's closest living relatives, and sooty mangabeys, an Old World monkey native to West and Central Africa, and noticed that both animals climbed up trees with the same effort. The downward climb, however, was different.

Employing software typically used to analyze the movements of human athletes, Ms. Joy saw that when chimpanzees climbed down a tree, they extended their shoulders and elbows above their heads to a far greater degree than the smaller monkeys. Compared with the sooty mangabeys, the chimps flexed their shoulders about 14 degrees more, and extended their elbows about 34 degrees more, when climbing down (versus up) a tree.

"The mangabeys had a sort of similar motion to how they climbed up, a pretty angled way to hold their arms," Ms. Joy said. For the chimps, it was like they were in a controlled fall, while also using a full range of motion to go as quickly as possible.

Susan Larson, a professor of anatomical sciences at Stony Brook University in New York, who was not involved in the study, said the new findings offered critical insight into the hominid evolution from trees to land. "I think it does give us a way of thinking about why early humans would retain these features for a long time, until they sort of abandoned trees and became bipedal hunters," she said. *MIRIAM FAUZIA*

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'What I think we're seeing is the virus continuing to evolve, and then leading to waves of infection, hopefully mostly mild in severity.'

Dr. Dan Barouch, head of the Center for Virology and Vaccine Research at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, on the latest uptick in coronavirus cases.

OUT THERE | DENNIS OVERBYE

The Universe's Unpredictability

Could even a 'theory of everything' ever really explain it all?

WHAT GOOD ARE the laws of physics if we can't solve the equations that describe them?

That was the question that occurred to me on reading an article in The Guardian by Andrew Pontzen, a cosmologist at University College London who spends his days running computer simulations of black holes, stars, galaxies and the birth and growth of the universe. His point was that he and the rest of us are bound to fail.

"Even if we imagine that humanity will ultimately discover a 'theory of everything' covering all individual particles and forces, that theory's explanatory value for the universe as a whole is likely to be marginal," Dr. Pontzen wrote.

No matter how well we think we know the basic laws of physics and the ever-expanding list of elementary particles, there is not enough computer power in the universe to keep track of them all. And we can never know enough to predict reliably what happens when all these particles collide or otherwise interact. A decimal point added to an estimation of, say, a particle's location or velocity can reverberate through history and change the outcome billions of years later, by way of the so-called butterfly effect of chaos theory.

Consider something as simple as, say, Earth's orbit around the sun, Dr. Pontzen said. Left to its own devices, our world, or its crispy fossil, would go on forever in the same orbit. But in the fullness of cosmic time, gravitational nudges from other planets in the solar system can change its course. Depending on how precisely we characterize these nudges, and the stuff being nudged, gravitational calculations can produce wildly divergent predictions of where the Earth and its siblings will be hundreds of millions of years from now.

As a result, in practice, we cannot predict either the future or the past. Cosmologists like Dr. Pontzen can hedge their bets by zooming out and considering the big picture — large agglomerations of material like clouds of gas, or systems whose collective behavior is predictable and not dependent on individual variations. We can boil pasta without keeping track of every molecule in the water.

But there is a risk of presuming too much order. Take an anthill, Dr. Pontzen suggests. The movements of any individual ant seem random. But if you look at the whole, the anthill seems to be buzzing with purpose and organization. It is tempting to see a collective consciousness at work, Dr. Pontzen writes, but "there are just lone ants" following simple rules. "The sophistication emerges from the sheer number of individuals following these rules," he notes, quoting the Princeton physicist Philip W. Anderson: "More is different."

In cosmology, a plausible explanation of the history of the universe has formed by making simple assumptions about stuff we know nothing about — dark matter and dark energy — but that nonetheless makes up 95 percent of the universe. Supposedly this "dark side" of the universe interacts with the 5 percent of known stuff — atoms — solely through gravity. After the Big Bang, the story goes, pools of dark matter formed, which pulled in atomic matter, which condensed into clouds, which heated up and became stars and galaxies. As the universe expanded, the dark energy permeating it also expanded and began pushing the galaxies farther and faster apart.

But this narrative breaks down early on, in the first few hundred million years, when stars, galaxies and black holes were forming in a messy, poorly understood process that researchers call "gastrophysics."

Its mechanics are stupefyingly hard to predict, involving magnetic fields, the nature and composition of the first stars and other unknown effects. "Certainly nobody can do it right now starting simply from well-trusted laws of physics, irrespective of the amount of computer power on offer," Dr. Pontzen said in an email.

Recent data from the James Webb Space Telescope, revealing galaxies and black holes that seem too massive and too early in the universe for the "standard model" of cosmology to explain, would seem to add to the trouble. Is this enough to send cosmologists back to their drawing boards?

Dr. Pontzen is not convinced that the time has come for cosmologists to abandon their hard-won model of the universe. Cosmic history is too complex to simulate in any detail. Our sun alone, he points out, contains 10^57 atoms, and there are trillions upon trillions of such stars out there.

A half-century ago astronomers discovered that the universe, with its stars and galaxies, was brimming with microwave radiation left over from the Big Bang. Mapping this radiation has allowed astronomers to create a baby picture of the cosmos, as it existed only 380,000 years after time began.

In principle, all history could be embedded there in the subtle curls and wisps of primordial energy. In practice, it is impossible to read the unfolding of time in those microwaves well enough to discern the rise and fall of the dinosaurs, the dawn of the atomic age or the appearance of a question mark in the sky billions of years later. Nearly 14 billion years of quantum uncertainty, accidents and cosmic riffraff stand between then and now.

At last count, physicists have identified some 17 types of elementary particles that make up the physical universe, and at least four ways that they interact — through gravity, electromagnetism and the so-called strong and weak nuclear forces.

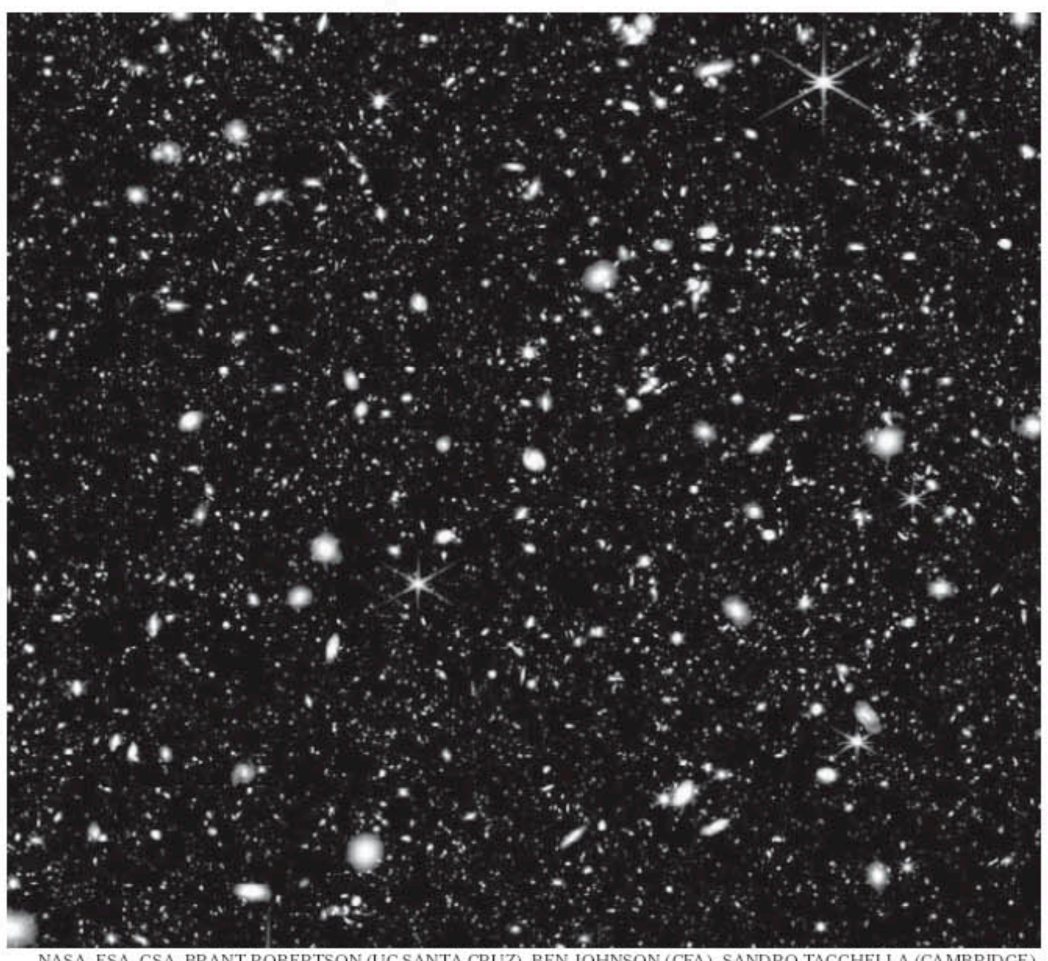
The cosmic bet that Western science has undertaken is to show that those four forces, and maybe others yet to be discovered, acting on a vast ensemble of atoms and their constituents, are enough to explain stars, rainbows, flowers, ourselves and, indeed, the existence of the universe as a whole. That is quite an intellectual and philosophical mountain to climb.

In fact, for all our faith in materialism, Dr. Pontzen said, we might never know if we succeeded. "Our origins are written in the sky," he said, "and we are just learning how to read them."

In his new book, "The Universe in a Box: Simulations and the Quest to Code the Cosmos," Dr. Pontzen quotes an oath suggested by Emanuel Derman, a particle physicist who became a quantitative analyst for Goldman Sachs and is now a professor at Columbia: "I will not give the people who use my models false comfort about their accuracy. I will make the assumptions and oversights explicit to all who use them."

In his email, Dr. Pontzen added, "This is, I suggest, sometimes a good maxim for physics, too, especially in domains as complex as cosmological simulations."

For now, he added, we can take comfort in the notion that the universe is lawful: "Ultimately, galaxies are less like machines and more like animals — loosely understandable, rewarding to study, but only partially predictable. Accepting this requires a shift in perspective, but it makes our vision of the universe all the richer."



NASA, ESA, CSA, BRANT ROBERTSON (UC SANTA CRUZ), BEN JOHNSON (CFA), SANDRO TACCHELLA (CAMBRIDGE), MARCIA RIEKE (UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA), DANIEL EISENSTEIN (CFA)

Data from the James Webb Space Telescope may add to the complexity of trying to explain the universe with the "standard model" of cosmology.

New Hope for the 'Silver Tsunami'

A study finds that a drug lowers health risks for older Americans with H.I.V.

By BENJAMIN RYAN

Americans with H.I.V. are achieving the once unthinkable: a steady march into older age. But beginning around age 50, many people living with the virus face a host of health problems, from heart disease and diabetes to social isolation and cognitive decline.

And so the medical research community, which some three decades ago developed lifesaving drugs to keep the virus at bay, is now hunting for new ways to keep people with H.I.V. healthier in their later years.

A recent study, for example, showed that a statin drug significantly lowered the risk of heart attacks and strokes among middle-aged and older adults with H.I.V., and may reveal biological insights into why this group tends to age faster than others. And a crop of academic hospitals have established specialized clinics for older people with the virus, offering medical experts as well as social workers, substance abuse counselors, psychologists and nutritionists.

"I have been unbelievably impressed at how care for the older H.I.V. population has really exploded," said Dr. Nathan Goldstein, who heads one such clinic at Mount Sinai in New York City. "I get emails every day about new models, new grant funding. People are paying so much attention to this." More than two dozen H.I.V. and aging experts also expressed optimism, in contrast to the more grim perspective many held a decade ago.

Researchers have often referred to a looming "silver tsunami" of older people with H.I.V. needing better care. In 2021, there were 572,000 Americans aged 50 and older diagnosed with H.I.V., up 73 percent from 2011.

Today, two-thirds of deaths in the H.I.V. population are from causes other than the virus. This aging group faces an increased risk of diabetes, liver and kidney disease, osteoporosis, cognitive decline and various cancers.

But perhaps their most pressing health concern is a doubled risk of cardiovascular disease compared with people who do not carry the virus. Researchers in the Netherlands estimated that by 2030, more than three-quarters of that country's H.I.V. population will have cardiovascular disease, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart attacks or strokes.

Seeking a bulwark against this mounting threat, the National Institutes of Health invested $100 million in a randomized controlled trial, called Reprieve, that tested a statin medication against a placebo among 7,769 people with H.I.V. 40 to 75 years old. The volunteers were relatively healthy and on stable antiretroviral treatment, so they typically would not have been recommended a statin. But the results of that trial, published in The New England Journal of Medicine, showed that the drug lowered the volunteers' risk of major cardiovascular events by more than one-third.

People with the disease have a doubled chance of cardiovascular disease.

"This is really an important study," said Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, who as the former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases — he retired in December — was among the N.I.H.'s leaders who approved Reprieve's mammoth budget. "The results, in some respects — they're even better than I would have expected."

Donté Smith, a health consultant from Kansas City, Mo., is 37 but began taking a statin earlier this year. Mx. Smith, who is genderqueer and uses gender-neutral pronouns, said they were motivated to take the medication because, in addition to H.I.V., they had a family history of cardiovascular disease and diabetes and had smoked on and off.

Mx. Smith also noted that the virus took an extra toll on Black and L.G.B.T.Q. people. Of the nearly 1.1 million Americans diagnosed with H.I.V., 63 percent are gay and bisexual men, and 40 percent are Black.

"A lot of us don't make it," Mx. Smith said. "It's important to buck that trend. The best revenge for me is being an elder and being able to share and exist and to still be here."

Heart disease and other conditions occur disproportionately among H.I.V.-positive people in part because of environmental risk factors that are more common among this group.

"People aging with H.I.V. are more likely to continue to smoke cigarettes, consume unhealthy amounts of alcohol and use cocaine than people aging without H.I.V.," said Dr. Amy Justice, a clinical epidemiologist at Yale School of Medicine who studies this population. "Each of these behaviors adds to the excess risk of cardiovascular disease."

Even without those risk factors, aging is accelerated in people with H.I.V. Researchers have long believed the reason to be chronic inflammation and immune dysregulation spawned by the virus, even when it is controlled by antiretroviral drugs.

Dr. Steven Grinspoon, Reprieve's lead author and a professor at Harvard Medical School, said that the clinical trial also measured many chemical markers of inflammation in the volunteers' blood and scanned their coronary arteries. The researchers are now looking at whether these data can help explain why the statin lowered cardiovascular events. The researchers will present their findings at a meeting in November.

Dr. Fauci suspected that this analysis will most likely reveal that the statin tamped down the volunteers' chronic inflammation, and in turn prevented the plaque buildup in the arteries that can precipitate a heart attack or stroke.

But experts said that the long-term care of people with H.I.V. will depend on much more than prescription drugs. An array of social problems are especially prevalent among older people with H.I.V. and can exacerbate the perils of aging, including poverty, loneliness, addiction, mental illness, stigma and housing insecurity.

Paul Aguilar, 60, was given five years to live when he was diagnosed with H.I.V. in 1988. He has survived, but not without struggle. The fat has drained from his face, a side effect of the toxic early generation of antiretroviral drugs. And he has weathered waves of lost peers in San Francisco: first from AIDS and more recently from other illnesses.

Last year, he began going to the "Golden Compass" program for aging H.I.V. patients at the University of California, San Francisco, which provides a panoply of services, including cardiology, exercise classes and dental, vision and mental health care. He said that the psychological counseling and support he received there helped him cope with his closest friend's death by suicide and his own subsequent mental health crisis.

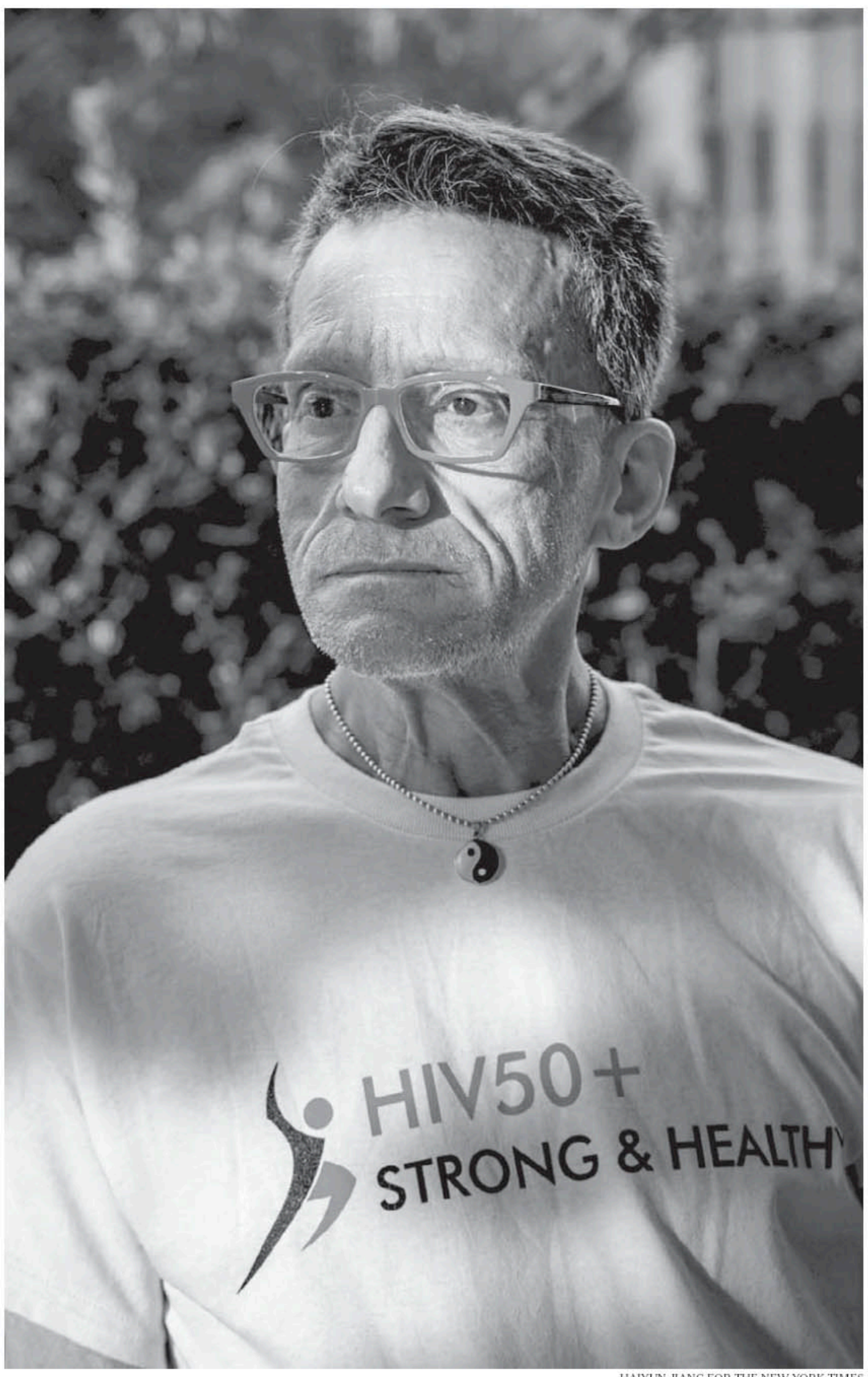
The university's program is "really a godsend," Mr. Aguilar said, noting that he has no out-of-pocket costs, thanks to his coverage from Medicare and Medicaid.

But the vast majority of older people with the virus still lack the type of high-quality care that has helped Mr. Aguilar thrive, experts said. Such programs are often prohibitively expensive and pose staffing and space demands that many clinics, especially in resource-poor areas, cannot hope to meet.

"Patients are falling through the cracks," said Jules Levin, 73, a leading activist holding the bullhorn on behalf of H.I.V.-positive seniors such as himself.

After learning about the Reprieve study's findings, Mr. Aguilar asked his doctor about starting a statin.

"I'm going to be crotchety and telling kids to get off my lawn," he quipped.



HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, Paul Aguilar, who recently began attending a program for aging H.I.V. patients. Below, Donté Smith. "A lot of us don't make it," Mx. Smith said. "It's important to buck that trend."

ARIN YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Patient's Baffling Illness Is Attributed to a Worm

During surgery, doctors in Australia made an alarming discovery in a woman's brain.

By AMANDA HOLPUCH

Doctors in Australia had screened, scanned and tested a woman to find out why she was sick after being hospitalized with abdominal pains and diarrhea. They were not prepared for what they found.

A three-inch red worm was living in the woman's brain.

The worm was removed last year after doctors spent more than a year trying to find the cause of the woman's distress.

The hunt for the answer, and the alarming discovery, was described this month in Emerging Infectious Diseases, a monthly journal published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The woman, whom the article identifies as a 64-year-old resident of southeastern New South Wales, Australia, was admitted to a hospital in January 2021 after complaining of diarrhea and abdominal pain for three weeks. She had a dry cough and night sweats.

Scientists and doctors from Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne said in the journal article that the woman was initially told she had a rare lung infection, but the cause was unknown.

Her symptoms improved with treatment, but weeks later, she was hospitalized again, this time with a fever and cough. Doctors then treated her for a group of blood disorders known as hypereosinophilic syndrome, and the medicine they used suppressed her immune system.

Over a three-month period in 2022, she experienced forgetfulness and worsening depression. A magnetic resonance imaging exam showed a brain lesion, and in June 2022, doctors performed a biopsy.

Inside the lesion, doctors found a "string-like structure" and removed it. It was a red, live parasitic worm, about 3.15 inches long and 0.04 of an inch in diameter.

They determined that it was an Ophidascaris robertsi, a type of roundworm that is native to Australia and reproduces in a large snake, the carpet python, which takes its name from its intricate markings. The pythons shed the worm's eggs in their feces. The eggs are then ingested by small mammals, and the worms can grow inside them.

Roundworms infect hundreds of millions of people globally, according to the Cleveland Clinic, but the researchers in Australia said this was the first report of the Ophidascaris worm species infecting a human.

The woman may have been infected by the worm the same way small animals typically are: by accidentally consuming worm eggs.

Carpet pythons were at a lake area near where the woman lived, the article said. She had no direct contact with the snakes but often gathered warrigal greens, which are similar to spinach, from around the lake to cook. The article said that she could have inadvertently consumed worm eggs by eating the greens or because her hands or her kitchen were contaminated with them.

Scott Gardner, a professor of biological sciences and the curator of the Manter Laboratory of Parasitology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said that people did not need to panic about being infected by an Ophidascaris from snakes and that they should use good hygiene to avoid being infected by parasites.

"A lot of the parasites that can affect people do so because we get in the wrong place at the wrong time," Dr. Gardner, who was not involved with the Australia study, said in an interview. "So we ingest some eggs that aren't supposed to come into us, and if we're immunocompromised then we can have a pretty serious infection."

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES/CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Doctors found a three-inch live parasitic worm in a woman's brain after spending more than a year trying to find the cause of her distress. It was a type of roundworm native to Australia.

Karina Kennedy, the director of microbiology at Canberra Hospital and an author of the article, said in a news release that the woman's initial symptoms "were likely due to migration of roundworm larvae from the bowel and into other organs, such as the liver and the lungs."

In the first stages of the woman's illness, however, doctors were not able to find evidence of the parasite, Dr. Kennedy said.

"At that time, trying to identify the microscopic larvae, which had never previously been identified as causing human infection, was a bit like trying to find a needle in a haystack," she said.

Six months after the brain surgery, the woman's psychiatric symptoms remained, but had improved, the article said. She was also treated with medicine to kill worm larvae that may have been in her other organs. She is still being monitored by infectious disease and brain specialists.

Dr. Kennedy, who is also an associate professor at the Australian National University medical school, advised people to wash their hands after gardening and touching foraged products, and to thoroughly wash foods and surfaces used for cooking.

In the article, the scientists and doctors involved with the woman's case said that her experience emphasized the risk of diseases spreading from animals to humans. Outbreaks of these kinds of diseases have become more frequent in recent decades and account for about 60 percent of all known infectious diseases and 75 percent of new and emerging ones, according to the C.D.C.

Though the type of worm that infected the woman is endemic to Australia, the Ophidascaris species infects snakes in other parts of the world. Scientists said in the article that this case showed "that additional human cases may emerge globally."

'Zombie Trout' Are Unsettling Montana

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

diately to avoid a total collapse of those trout fisheries," they wrote. "This is an all-hands-on-deck moment."

For businesses and enthusiasts alike, the 155-mile Big Hole River is not the only cherished waterway in the state to be eliciting such concerns. Other rivers in the Jefferson Basin — including sections of the Beaverhead and the Ruby, both top trout streams — have experienced similar declines, as has the upper Clark Fork, though some experts suggest the latter may be partly related to runoff from past mining.

Unlike many states, Montana does not stock its rivers with hatchery-reared fish, depending instead on wild populations to sustain themselves. If those populations crash, it might be a long time before they recover.

Environmental groups have also recently sued to have the Arctic grayling, a distinctive-looking native fish, listed as endangered because of its dwindling numbers. The Big Hole is the only river in the lower 48 states where it's found.

All of that adds uncertainty to the future of fly fishing for Montana, where catching trout with artificial insects gently lofted onto the surface of cold flowing water is not just a pastime but part of the state's identity.

Despite the worrying conditions, the Big Hole was still bustling recently with rafts and drift boats. With summer winding down, the streams are cooling, and that may grant the fish a reprieve.

One of Craig Fellin's first clients was the writer Thomas McGuane, whose book "The Longest Silence" captured his experience:

"I was swept away by the perfection of things, by the glorious shape of each trout, by the angelic miniature perfection of mayflies, and by the pure wild silk of the Big Hole River. It is for such things that we were placed on this careening mudball."

It's been roughly 30 years since interest in fly fishing soared upon the release of "A River Runs Through It," the Robert Redford film based on the book by Norman Maclean, and it surged again during the pandemic as people sought outdoor activities. Important to Montana's economy, angling tourism contributes an estimated $900 million a year to the state.

The Big Hole has long been subject to warm temperatures and low flows in the summer. In 1995, Craig Fellin was one of the founders of the Big Hole Watershed Committee, a group of valley residents formed to find voluntary ways to ease pressure from irrigation and fishing.

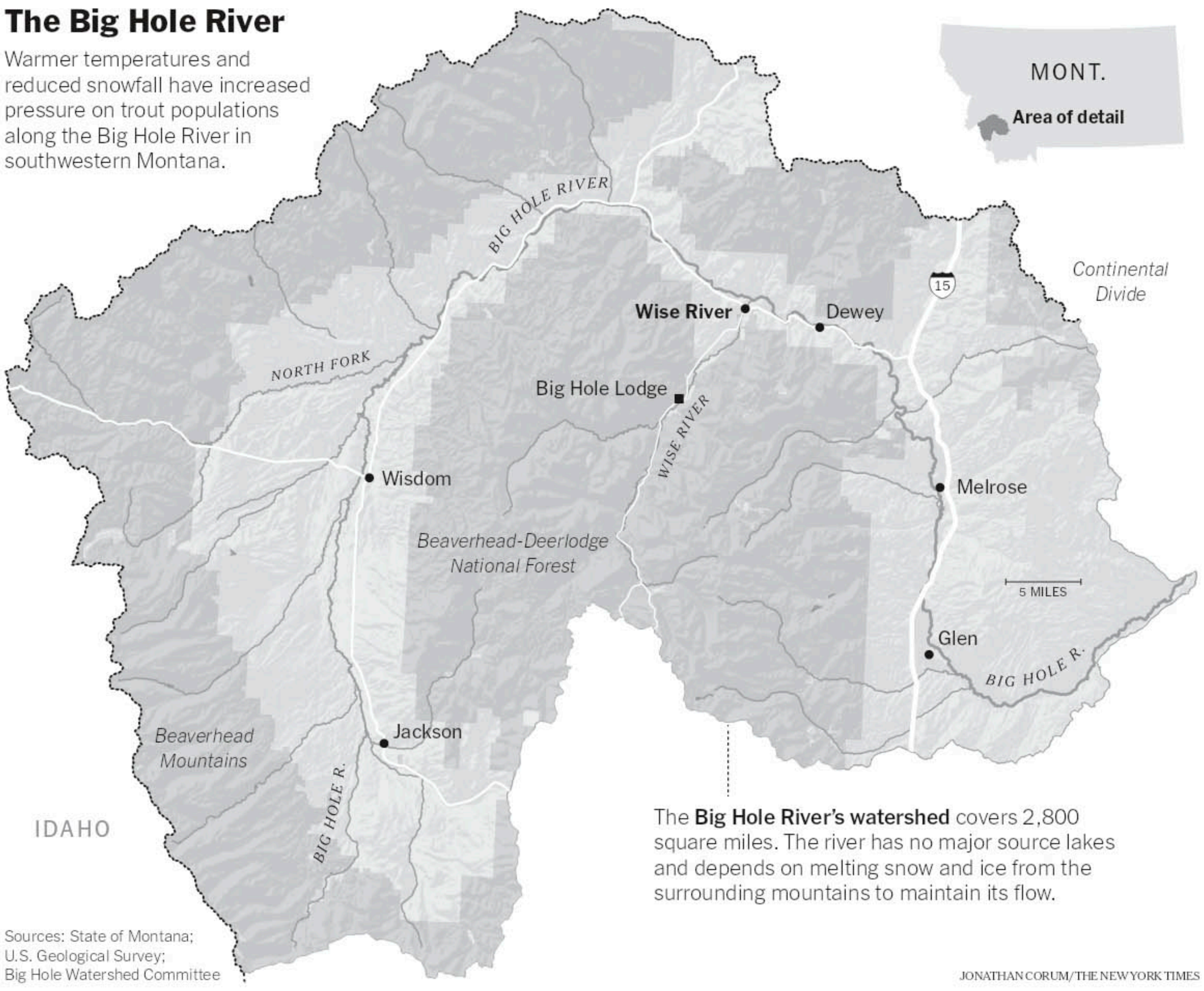
But lately things have grown worse, with tensions rising among the competing forces of fishing enthusiasts, the businesses that cater to them and the state's residents. Some blame the outfitting industry, targeting the companies' vehicles and drilling holes in their gas tanks.

The younger Mr. Fellin, who studied water law and is the manager of the lodge and a guide, said the state's fly fishing industry would have to shoulder some of the responsibility of helping fish survive.

The sport has exploded along the state's rivers, with many fearing that trout are being "loved to death." For example, the number of angler days — or any part of a day spent fishing per person on a given day — on the Big Hole increased to more than 118,000 in 2020, up from 71,553 in 2011.

The situation has become so pressing that the state has imposed a number of restrictions, including an unusually high number of river closures and "hoot owl" limits — which end fishing in the afternoon when the water warms. And to protect spawning brown trout, Montana officials have decided to halt fishing two weeks earlier than usual, on Sept. 30, for portions of the Big Hole, Ruby and Beaverhead Rivers.

Last month, Governor Gianforte visited the Big Hole valley, appearing in Wise River before a house packed with those affected by the fishing concerns. He did not, as the group had hoped, say he would appoint a task force, but instead delegated the work to state fishery experts. The Save Wild Trout organization has contracted with its own scientist to assess water quality and study possible causes of the steep declines. The research will take place over the next several years.



JONATHAN CORUM/THE NEW YORK TIMES

TRAVIS THOMPSON

ABOVE AND BELOW, MATTHEW HAMON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Clockwise from above left: a trout with cauliflower-like lesions; Wade Fellin, right, and his father, Craig, who have run the Big Hole Lodge since the 1980s; Montana has warmed 2.7 degrees since 1950, and the pace is quickening.

Experts believe that a combination of factors has caused the collapse. At the top of their list of suspects is the climate: Montana has warmed an average of 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit since 1950, and the pace is quickening, especially in the winter and spring. Those seasons are critical for replenishing the rivers with the cold, clear water that trout thrive in. Temperatures in the high mountain valleys of the Rockies are increasing twice as fast or more than temperatures nationally.

"There is an ongoing aridification of the West," said Steven W. Running, a professor emeritus of ecosystem and conservation sciences at the University of Montana. "As it warms up, evaporation increases and precipitation is not increasing, the snow melts earlier," he said. "Once you've melted through that snowpack, there is nothing to cool that water down."

"We're not getting the high flows that flush the sediment out of the river" and help maintain a healthy fish habitat, added Brian Wheeler, executive director of the Big Hole River Foundation, a nonprofit in Dillon, Mont., that monitors water quality.

Mr. Running noted that warmer water has lower levels of dissolved oxygen for the fish, "and that is what really pounds them."

State officials agree that climate plays a major role. "Fish are continually getting stressed through the summer with the drought conditions and going into another stressful situation in the fall when they are spawning," said Eileen Ryce, head of the fisheries bureau for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. "All of that is hard on fish survival. On top of that, you add angling and handling of fish."

Many trout are caught and released, but anglers' handling of them can remove a layer of protective slime, and playing a hooked fish at the end of the line can weaken them.

Fish can then become susceptible to pathogens. A common fungus appearing on the fish is saprolegnia, Dr. Ryce said, but it is now emerging with alarming frequency.

Researchers have not determined the cause of the lesions, and no novel pathogens have been found, she said. The state has opened a web portal where people can submit descriptions or photos of ailing trout.

Other likely contributors to the trout's disappearance include competition for resources from agricultural practices, some say. Ranchers along the river divert water from the river to their fields to grow alfalfa for hay. While the irrigation method is legal, it drastically reduces flows in summer months and exacerbates harm to fish.

Manure from cattle grazing on fields along the river leaches nutrients into the stream, causing algae blooms. "They flood-irrigate those fields, and so we are making tea out of the manure," Mr. Fellin said.

Some ranchers have made changes to assure the health of the Big Hole, which is situated in the county that has more cattle than any other in the state.

"We work diligently to fence riparian areas off," said JM Peck, who owns and manages the Trapper Creek ranch, near Melrose, with others in his family. "And we work very hard to give water back when times are tough. It's a shared sacrifice."

Insect population research is also underway, with one focus on salmonflies.

Jackson Birrell, director of the Salmonfly Project, which studies the decline of aquatic insects throughout the West, warned that

Catch and release can make trout susceptible to fungal disease.

the so-called insect apocalypse was real and that it could substantially affect trout populations. One study on a Colorado river found that salmonflies accounted for slightly more than half of the trout diet.

He has just begun a study on the Big Hole's insect environs, although there is not enough historical data on the river to compare the past to this year. So far, he said, the number of salmonflies and other insects in the area seems robust. "The decline in trout," he said, "is not food-related."

Still, salmonflies are less prevalent throughout the West than they once were, he noted, vanishing from the Logan River in Utah and portions of the Provo River. They have receded or disappeared on 500 miles of river in Montana.

Another climate-related threat to Montana's fly fishing is the appearance in some rivers of invasive small mouth bass, a warm-water species that prey on trout. State officials have proposed emergency regulations on the Bitterroot River, for example, that require anglers to kill and report any small mouth bass they catch.

A few other potential influences on the trout have been bandied about. Some fish have developed proliferative kidney disease. And runoff from battling wildfires over the years with flame retardant containing ammonium phosphate could be a highly toxic component.

As research continues, Mr. Fellin said his family and the fishing guides he employs had changed their practices to adapt to the river's changes, trying to aid in the recovery of both the Big Hole and its trout.

"The state says 73, but we stop fishing at 68 degrees, pinch barbs and leave spawning fish alone," he said. "We owe it to the resource to keep these wild animals alive."

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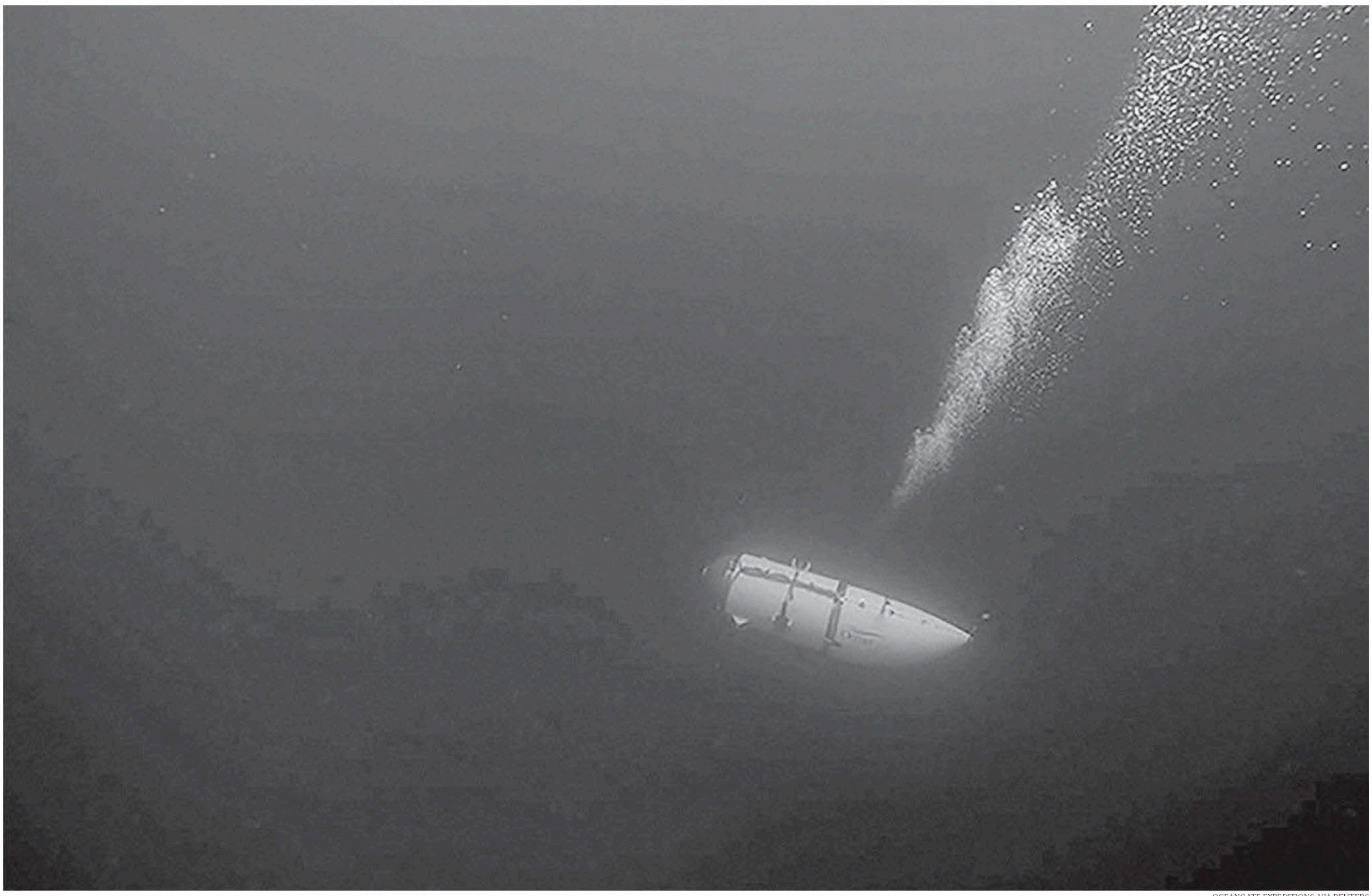


OCEANGATE EXPEDITIONS, VIA REUTERS

These Risky Dives to the Titanic Were Irresistible

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

his undersea skills would let him manage Titan's obvious design flaws. Another sees his love for the storied 1912 shipwreck — he was known as Mr. Titanic — as blinding him to the danger. But Mr. Nargeolet may have had other motivations as well.

For decades, the submariner was locked in a feud with Robert D. Ballard, an American oceanographer often credited with the wreck's 1985 discovery. The two men represented different sides of a broader dispute involving governments in opposition across the Atlantic Ocean as well as competing philosophies on shipwrecks, a fray that Washington rejoined in recent days. Both sought the moral high ground. Their conflict centered on whether the ship's artifacts should be retrieved.

And it never left Mr. Nargeolet's mind, even into the hours before his final dive.

A Star Is Born

More than two miles down, in pitch darkness at the bottom of the icy North Atlantic, Titanic lies split in two. The bow rests a half mile from the stern. Nearby are boilers, engines, hatch covers, hull slabs, deckhouse ruins and other large parts that broke free.

The surrounding debris fields hold small, rugged items — lumps of coal, shoes, champagne bottles, jewelry. Bones and bodies disappeared long ago. Overall, the ship's parts and human paraphernalia extend over roughly three square miles.

Divers cannot see the spectacle at a glance. The enormous scale of the ship's disintegration starts to hit home only after repeated visits. For Mr. Nargeolet, it was a giant puzzle. He wanted to fit the pieces together and worried that the sea would take them before he could figure it out.

Jean Jarry, a French colleague of Mr. Nargeolet's who helped find Titanic, said one of the submariner's dreams was to produce "a complete inventory of the wreck before it was entirely destroyed by marine life."

Mr. Nargeolet heard the sea's call as a young man and in 1964, at age 18, joined the French Navy. He dived, cleared mines, served as a submarine pilot and explored shipwrecks.

In 1986, he went to work for the French maritime agency that had helped find Titanic the year before. Starting in 1987, as a submersible pilot on contract to an American firm, wielding robotic arms, Mr. Nargeolet helped retrieve more than 5,500 artifacts.

The finds included chandeliers, a bronze cherub from the ship's grand staircase, and 65 perfume vials belonging to a passenger in first class. Also raised was a leather bag full of sheet music and love letters. The big haul was a section of Titanic's hull. It weighed 17 tons and displayed a row of portholes.

In all, Mr. Nargeolet made 38 dives to the shipwreck. He eventually went to work for RMS Titanic Inc. The company, based near Atlanta, had obtained from a federal court in Norfolk, Va., the exclusive salvage rights to the ship's artifacts. Mr. Nargeolet became the company's director of underwater research.

He saw the shipwreck as a kind of archaeological site whose treasures could become the showpieces of museums and exhibitions. He cast the displays as important not only for public education but also for commemorating the more than 1,500 people who lost their lives.

Mr. Nargeolet would sometimes tour with the artifacts. In 2017, he traveled to Peoria, Ill., to speak at a traveling exhibition. While there, he gave Bryce Orwig, an 11-year-old boy undergoing cancer treatments, an individual tour. "He made it special," Bryce recalled.

When not honoring the artifacts, Mr. Nargeolet would visit the sunken liner whenever he could, even if the expeditions had no interest in picking up remains. He simply wanted to see Titanic up close.

In 2019, he advised Mr. Vescovo when the sea explorer dived to the ship's resting place. The assembled team of maritime experts judged that the liner's remains were rapidly falling apart, done in by rust, corrosive salts, microbes and deep-sea creatures.

In the next years, that worry stuck with the submariner.

"I'm currently on the site of the Titanic," Mr. Nargeolet said in an email to Mr. Jarry on Saturday, June 17 — the day before he and four others perished on Titan's last dive. "In my opinion, the future of the Titanic, like all wrecks, is to disappear."

KEYSTONE PRESS/ALAMY

PAMELA ORWIG

Top, an undated photograph of the Titan submersible, which imploded on June 18 while descending to the Titanic. Middle, the oceanographer Robert D. Ballard in 1985. Above, Paul-Henri Nargeolet and 11-year-old Bryce Orwig in 2017.

If the ocean liner's memory is to be preserved, Mr. Nargeolet added, "now is the moment we must do it."

A Rift Beneath the Sea

Dr. Ballard, an oceanographer, is often credited with discovering the Titanic. He has made this claim himself in the subtitle of his memoir and when he told a federal judge in Virginia in 2017, "I'm the person who discovered the Titanic." He has also said that Jean-Louis Michel, leader of the French team in the 1985 expedition, "never gets enough credit" as the shipwreck's co-discoverer.

Dr. Ballard was a senior scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod when the Titanic was found. He started out on the same side as Mr. Nargeolet. In October 1985, he told Congress that he supported "recovering those delicate items lying outside the hull."

By definition, such objects would be shoes, leather bags and other small items.

Then, as the French and Mr. Nargeolet recovered such artifacts, as well as parts from inside the ship, he reversed himself. Dr. Ballard became the public voice of preservation, arguing that the Titanic, like the remains of U.S.S. Arizona at Pearl Harbor, should be honored as a great tragedy and left untouched.

He also cast the ship's salvors as grave robbers. His voice carried far. Starting in 1987, he published several books with "Titanic" in the title and hosted a similar number of television shows.

The French, including Mr. Nargeolet, deeply resented being called grave robbers and came to see the American expert as stealing credit for the ship's discovery.

"He felt a very strong sense of betrayal," Dr. McLaren said of Mr. Nargeolet. "It was something he talked about repeatedly. It never left his mind."

Mr. Nargeolet and Dr. Ballard began to battle openly after the American in late 2004 condemned the salvors in a National Geographic article. "Grave site or gold mine?" a photo caption asked. He accused the divers of damaging the famous liner, calling them "bulls in a China shop."

Mr. Nargeolet fired back. In an open letter, he accused Dr. Ballard of conflating natural decay of the wreck with human damage. "Your 'famous' holes on the deck are not caused by submersibles," he wrote. "They grow year after year." He called Dr. Ballard unfamiliar with shipwrecks in general.

The next year, in 2006, Dr. Ballard published a lengthy retort. He referred to Mr. Nargeolet as "the author of these statements," as if naming the Frenchman gave him undue respect.

Denying naïveté, Dr. Ballard said he knew of "no other person on Earth that has worked on as many shipwrecks in the deep sea as I have." But his list of 57 vessels named only two that predated Titanic's discovery. And they were not shipwrecks but lost submarines.

Recently, the two men published dueling books. Dr. Ballard's, in 2021, as usual, made no mention of Mr. Nargeolet by name. It characterized the artifact seekers as "vultures."

Dr. Ballard told of gathering "vivid images" meant to document human damage to the famous liner. "I wanted people to start thinking about the oceans themselves as a museum to be visited and respected, but not pillaged," he wrote.

In 2022, Mr. Nargeolet's book, published in France, recounted his decades of Titanic dives, explorations and artifact recoveries.

In his description of the wreck's discovery, Mr. Nargeolet highlighted an awkward moment for Dr. Ballard that he had learned about. It happened late at night. In the control room, Mr. Michel, leader of the French team and co-leader of the expedition, was monitoring a tethered robot when, suddenly, images of wreck debris appeared on the video screen. It was the lost ship.

Dr. Ballard was off duty in his cabin, and to find him the excited team sent the ship's cook. The anticlimax, Mr. Nargeolet said, "does not prevent Bob Ballard from proclaiming himself the sole discoverer of the wreck."

Mr. Nargeolet in his book also described Dr. Ballard as breaking an agreement over the distribution of Titanic photos, calling him a man "for whom fair play is not a strong point." Dr. Ballard in his memoir blamed his Woods Hole boss for the breach. "The French were outraged," he wrote, "and so was I."

In an email, Dr. Ballard said he had a record of good relations with French oceanographers long before the Titanic's discovery and had shared credit with them repeatedly, including in a National Geographic article. He and Mr. Nargeolet, he added, had "little in common." Asked if he regretted casting the submariner and his peers as grave robbers, he made no comment.

"There is nothing to learn from recovering objects," Dr. Ballard said in an email. "The Titanic belongs to the sea."

Final Transmissions

By Saturday, June 17, the bad weather had finally let up. Mr. Nargeolet was preparing to make what would be his final dive when an email landed from Mr. Jarry. His French colleague said he had read and enjoyed Mr. Nargeolet's book. In an interview, Mr. Jarry said he discussed Dr. Ballard in the email exchange but declined to share parts of Mr. Nargeolet's reply concerning the American oceanographer.

The American, Mr. Jarry remarked, loved the fame of discovery, while the Frenchman loved the work of artifact preservation. "He was happy doing that," Mr. Jarry said.

Michel L'Hour, a close friend of Mr. Nargeolet's who ran France's underwater archaeology program, spoke to his old friend in May by video call, just before Mr. Nargeolet joined the Titan team in St. John's, Newfoundland. He argues that the feud with Dr. Ballard played no role in Mr. Nargeolet's risky dives and instead points to the submariner's trust in his technical skills.

"I said, 'Aren't you a little scared?'" Mr. L'Hour recalled. Mr. Nargeolet said he was, but believed he could help improve the novel technology.

"He saw it like a scientist in a lab, doing tests and learning as he was going," Mr. L'Hour said. As an accomplished diver, he added, Mr. Nargeolet knew risk management. "A risk is not a danger. A risk is something you can master."

Mr. Vescovo, the diver who hired Mr. Nargeolet, agreed. "I think he thought that, given his knowledge and experience, if anybody could make Titan safer, it was him," he said.

Mr. Nargeolet's legacy will live on, according to his former employer. RMS Titanic Inc. is planning new recoveries, despite losing his wide knowledge of the wreck site.

High on the company's list is one of Mr. Nargeolet's dreams — recovering the Marconi wireless telegraph that transmitted Titanic's distress calls. Responding ships helped save hundreds of lives, many of them women and children in lifeboats.

Jessica Sanders, president of RMS Titanic, said the company, in honor of Mr. Nargeolet, was committed to establishing new teams that will pick up where he left off in preserving what remains of the shipwreck, now 111 years old.

The aim, she said, "is to inspire that next generation — the next him."

Well

Ask Well

It looks as if I have fungus beneath my toenail, but how can I be sure? Does toenail fungus go away on its own?

Yellowing, brittle and unusual-looking toenails can be a sign that a fungal nail infection, called onychomycosis, has taken root. Experts say these infections don't go away on their own and can easily spread from person to person without treatment.

"Fungus tends to be greedy," said Dr. Boni Elewski, chair of the department of dermatology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. It can crawl under your toenail and spread into the nail itself, she said.

Toenail fungus affects an estimated one in 10 people worldwide, and becomes more common with age. People with diabetes or weakened immune systems are also susceptible, said Dr. Shari Lipner, a dermatologist at Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York City.

Experts say the first step to getting your normal toenail back is confirming you have fungus in the first place. Some telltale signs include thickened, discolored, cracked, misshapen and occasionally painful or smelly nails.

But fungus is to blame for only about half of abnormal-looking toenails, Dr. Elewski said. Toenail trauma can also cause discolored or thick toenails.

According to Dr. Lipner, doctors usually confirm toenail fungus by examining a clipping under a microscope.

They can also perform a PCR test or a fungal culture to determine which fungus species infected your nail. Most people have a type called trichophyton rubrum, Dr. Lipner said.

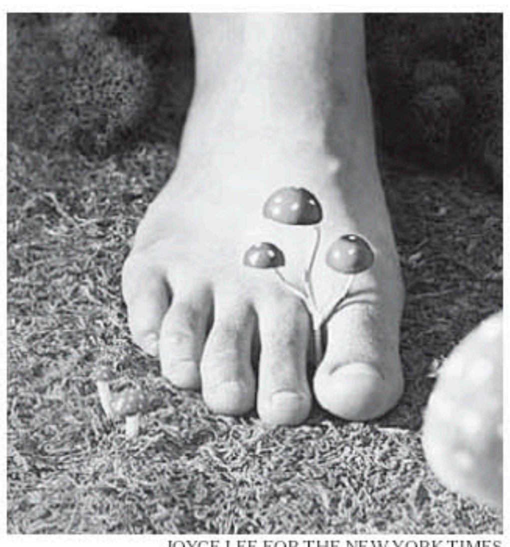
Prescription antifungals usually take care of the problem, but it's a bad idea to take them without confirming you have the fungus first, Dr. Elewski said. Unnecessary antifungal use can contribute to a growing problem called antifungal resistance.

If you want to actually kill the fungus, "a prescription antifungal is the only option," said Dr. Antonella Tosti, a dermatologist who treats nail disorders at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Topical antifungals can be useful for milder cases affecting just one or two toenails, Dr. Lipner said. But you might have to apply the medication for about a year.

If there's fungus under multiple nails, or if the toenails are extra thick, Dr. Lipner said, she usually opts for oral prescriptions. These pills, terbinafine or itraconazole, can kill toenail fungus in about three months. Dr. Lipner said that your toenail may look funky for a year as the new, uninfected toenail grows in.

In the meantime, some drugstore remedies could improve nail



JOYCE LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

appearance by soothing the surrounding skin or thinning the nail, Dr. Elewski said.

Whether you're prescribed a topical or oral antifungal, Dr. Tosti said it's important to stay on top of the treatment every day.

Eliminating toenail fungus doesn't mean you can't get it again, experts warn. In fact, an estimated 25 percent of people get repeat infections.

Dr. Lipner recommended thoroughly washing socks or other clothing that was in contact with your first infection, and discarding or disinfecting shoes you wore often when you had toenail fungus.

To stave off toenail fungus in general, keep your toenails trimmed and avoid walking around barefoot in gym locker rooms or around swimming pools, Dr. Lipner said. If you sweat often in closed-toed shoes, wear moisture-wicking socks and change into dry shoes if you can.

CAROLINE HOPKINS

How to Use Retinol Correctly

Over-the-counter products are popular, but it's important to get a dermatologist's advice.

By MELINDA WENNER MOYER

Over-the-counter retinol products are popular for good reason: In addition to helping to control acne, they can improve the overall appearance of skin and lessen the signs of aging. They "are perfect for reducing fine lines and large pores, improving skin texture and evening out skin tone," said Dr. Hope Mitchell, a dermatologist in Perrysburg, Ohio.

Yet they can also be tricky to use. Retinol products are made by many different brands, come in a slew of formulations and must be applied carefully, especially at first, because they can be irritating.

Retinols fall under the umbrella of compounds called retinoids, which are all derivatives of vitamin A, Dr. Mitchell said. Prescription-strength retinoids have been available since the 1970s and are found in acne medications including Retin-A and Accutane. Retinol is a milder retinoid, which is why it's available over the counter.

Retinol affects the skin in various ways. It increases skin cell turnover, "which causes a natural exfoliation," said Dr. Divya Shokeen, a cosmetic dermatologist in Manhattan Beach, Calif. This helps to clear out clogged pores, which can treat acne and prevent future breakouts.

Retinol also increases the skin's production of collagen, a protein that boosts firmness and elasticity. "Beginning in our 20s, we start to lose about 1 percent of our skin's collagen per year," said Dr. Marisa Garshick, a dermatologist in New York City. As that happens, she said, our skin starts to sag and become wrinkled; retinol works to counteract this.

In addition, retinol can lessen dark spots. "Retinols can help to reduce the overproduction of melanin, particularly in areas where it is concentrated and causing discoloration," Dr. Shokeen said.

A 2015 clinical trial found that when women between the ages of 40 and 55 used a retinol product daily for a year, it reduced the appearance of crow's feet by 44 percent and skin discoloration by 84 percent. Another

SCOTT SEMLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

clinical trial, from 2009, reported that daily use of a retinol cream in women ages 40 to 60 over a 26-week period reduced the appearance of fine and deep wrinkles.

Choosing the Right Product

Even though you can pick up a retinol product at nearly any drugstore or department store, Dr. Shokeen said it's best to first consult with a dermatologist to ensure that retinol is suitable for you, especially if you are breastfeeding or have a skin condition like eczema or rosacea. Pregnant women shouldn't use retinols, Dr. Shokeen added.

Generally, dermatologists advise starting with a mild formulation to reduce the risk of redness and irritation. Pick a brand you trust and choose its lowest-concentration product, Dr. Garshick suggested. Don't pay too much attention to the exact percentage of retinol advertised on the label, because different brands use different retinol compounds — so a product that has 1 percent retinol could be essentially equivalent to another product that has 0.3 percent.

If you have sensitive skin, you may want to seek out a product that includes other ingredients — like ceramides, niacinamide or hyaluronic acid — to help counteract dryness and inflammation, Dr. Garshick said. Also look for retinol products labeled "encapsulated," meaning the retinol is enveloped in a protective barrier and released into the skin over time, making it potentially less irritating.

When and How to Use Them

Above all, the experts said to start slow and be patient.

"Retinols can take anywhere between two to three months to start to take effect, and the benefits can continue to improve over the course of six months," Dr. Garshick said. It might take even longer before you start to see certain improvements with low-concentration retinols, she added.

To ensure that you're not allergic to any of the ingredients in a product, Dr. Shokeen suggested first applying it to a small patch of skin on the inside of your arm. If the skin doesn't become red, itchy or swollen within minutes or hours, you can start using it elsewhere, she said.

Dr. Garshick advised using the product one or two times a week for the first two weeks, to allow the skin to acclimate to it, and always applying it at night, since retinol breaks down when exposed to sunlight. "If the skin starts to become very red and irritated, feels like it's burning or stinging, or there's a lot of itching," it's time to take a temporary break, she said. Once your skin can handle a twice-weekly dose without becoming irritated, you can gradually increase the frequency to daily, she said. You can also switch to a stronger product.

Dr. Mitchell recommended applying a noncomedogenic (non-pore-clogging) moisturizer after using retinol to counteract irritation and dryness. And because retinol can make the skin more sun-sensitive, it's always smart to use sunscreen during the day.

Some people with acne may initially break out more when they first start using retinol, but these flare-ups are usually brief and the skin soon improves, Dr. Mitchell said.

"Your skin may look worse before it starts to look better, so try not to get discouraged," she said.

Covid's Effects on Your Heart

Three years into the pandemic, both short- and long-term risks are becoming more clear.

By DANA G. SMITH

During the first two years of the pandemic, from March 2020 to March 2022, there were approximately 90,000 more deaths in the United States attributed to cardiovascular disease than were expected for that span of time.

A majority of these occurred in people 65 and older — the age group with the highest risk for cardiovascular complications. But heart-related deaths also increased dramatically in younger adults. In fact, a study found that the sharpest rise in deaths from heart attack during that period occurred in 25- to 44-year-olds.

Some of these cardiovascular-related fatalities may have happened because it was harder to access medical care during the height of the pandemic. But physicians and researchers now have little doubt that Covid-19 itself was a factor. In addition to the complications that can occur during the acute phase of a Covid infection, there appears to be an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes and other problems up to a year after an infection. Experts are now trying to understand why.

"There's a very unique connection between this virus and the cardiovascular system," said Dr. Susan Cheng, the chair of cardiovascular health and population science at Cedars-Sinai, who led the study on heart attack deaths. "What is that connection? That's the million dollar question."

Cardiologists' leading theory for how Covid damages the heart and causes cardiovascular events is that it stimulates widespread inflammation.

"We know that inflammation itself increases our cardiovascular risk," said Dr. Luke Laffin, a cardiologist and co-director of the Center for Blood Pressure Disorders at the Cleveland Clinic. "We know that infectious diseases, particularly severe Covid-19 infections, lead to inflammation. So could that be the mechanism by which there's increased risk? Maybe."

Part of the immune system's response to infection or injury is to release proteins that cause inflammation and blood clotting. For people who have plaque built up in their arteries, the inflammation can cause that plaque to break apart, creating a blood clot and causing a heart attack or stroke. Because of this, experts say that people who already have plaque in their arteries — like many smokers and those with high blood pressure and cholesterol — also have the greatest risk of a Covid-induced heart attack.

In some cases, those proteins can cause a clot to form even without pre-existing plaque. If enough inflammation occurs in the blood vessels, irritating the cells there, a clot can form spontaneously, Dr. Cheng said. That's how a young person with no plaque can "still have a heart attack in the right conditions," she added.

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"There's a very unique connection between this virus and the cardiovascular system," one researcher said. "What is that connection? That's the million dollar question."

The potential for cardiovascular complications doesn't go away after someone has recovered from Covid. A large 2022 study tracking medical records of 691,455 patients in the United States found that people had a significantly higher risk of developing virtually all heart-related diseases in the year after a Covid infection. According to the research, people were 1.5 times more likely to have a stroke, nearly twice as likely to have a heart attack, and had between 1.6 and 2.4 times the risk of developing different types of arrhythmias.

"Early on, we saw the impact on the cardiovascular system during Covid illness," said Dr. Helene Glassberg, a cardiologist and associate professor of clinical medicine at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman

The potential for complications doesn't go away after recovery.

School of Medicine, who was not part of the study. "But now we're seeing the long-term consequences in people who've had prior Covid."

Some of these conditions may be caused by the lingering effects of the infection. Others may develop because Covid is also associated with the onset of risk factors for heart disease, most notably hypertension. One recent study found that nearly 21 percent of people who were hospitalized for a Covid infection, and close to 11 percent of people who had a milder infection and were not hospitalized, went on to develop high blood pressure in the following months.

Experts don't exactly know how Covid leads to hypertension. There may be something biological going on, but the general stress of the pandemic has probably also played a role, Dr. Laffin said.

Research has shown that people who are vaccinated are roughly 40 to 60 percent less likely to have a heart attack or stroke after a Covid infection than those who are unvaccinated. This may be because vaccinated people are less likely to develop severe Covid, which in turn lowers the risk of many of these heart-related issues. Or the vaccine may help protect the cardiovascular system itself — by reducing the inflammatory effects of Covid, for example.

There is a small risk of developing myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) in the weeks after getting an mRNA Covid vaccine made by Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna. However, the risk of myocarditis after having Covid is much higher. A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that males ages 12 to 29 — who have the greatest risk of vaccine complications — were four to eight times more likely to develop myocarditis after a Covid infection than in the three weeks after receiving a dose of vaccine. For males 30 and older, the risk of myocarditis was 28 times higher from Covid than from the vaccine.

"While it's important to understand that this vaccine-related event is real," Dr. Glassberg said, "the risk to your heart is much greater from Covid than from vaccine."

If you had Covid recently and are experiencing any cardiovascular symptoms, like chest pain or shortness of breath, or if you're at an increased risk for heart disease, you should tell your doctor.

"I ask all my patients when I see them, 'Have you had Covid since our last visit?'" Dr. Glassberg said. "My antennas are up on those folks. I'm looking at their blood pressure a little more. I'm making sure I'm aggressively controlling their cholesterol."

If you don't have any risk factors and aren't experiencing any symptoms, you can just tell your doctor that you had Covid at your next annual checkup. In the meantime, be sure to practice heart-healthy behaviors, like exercising regularly and eating well.

Tampon Fairness

Many states have ended a sales tax that's been called discriminatory.

By ALISHA HARIDASANI GUPTA

This month, a bipartisan Texas bill that eliminates sales taxes on menstrual products went into effect, making Texas the 24th state in the country to remove what is known as the "tampon tax."

Before the shift, Texas had classified period products, including pads, tampons, menstrual cups, discs and sponges, as optional or luxury items and applied a 6.25 percent tax. Opponents of the tampon tax have long claimed that because other items — like contact lenses and over-the-counter medications in most states — are categorized as necessary and therefore sold tax free, the tax on period products is discriminatory against those who menstruate.

"Every woman knows that these products are not optional," State Senator Joan Huffman, a Republican who spearheaded the bill

JULIA WEEKS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

So far, 24 states have eliminated the "tampon tax" on period products.

in the Senate, said in a statement. "They are essential to our health and well-being and should be tax exempt."

The new law also eliminates taxes on diapers for children and adults, baby wipes, bottles, maternity clothes and breast pumps. Sales taxes on period products, which can cost up to $20 every month, vary by state but they range from 4 to roughly 7 percent.

While that may be a small additional cost for any given purchase, when "compounded over somebody's lifetime," it can add up, particularly for those who live below or just above the poverty line, said Suzanne Herman, legal director at Period Law, a nonprofit organization that has been filing lawsuits around the country to challenge tampon taxes.

A 2019 survey of low-income women in St. Louis found that 64 percent were unable to afford menstrual products in the previous year — a situation that can hinder an individual's ability to work and can negatively affect mental health. Government programs for low-income people, like the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid, don't typically cover the cost of period products.

Dropping the tampon tax is part of a broader effort by student activists and lawmakers to make these products more accessible, echoing efforts in other countries, like Scotland, where period products are free. In the United States, 26 states and the District of Columbia have laws to offer free menstrual products in schools, and 25 states have laws to provide them in prisons. A new law introduced in Congress this year, the Menstrual Equity for All Act, proposes mandating Medicaid coverage of period products.

There are 21 states in which menstrual products are taxed, while other products, like Viagra, candies and condoms, are generally not, Ms. Herman said. (The remaining five states don't have sales taxes on anything.)

The first state in the country to drop the tampon tax was Minnesota in 1981, but the issue had been "largely ignored" elsewhere for decades, said Laura Strausfeld, founder and executive director of Period Law.

Things started to change in the last few years, as female representation in state legislatures increased and a new generation revitalized the issue, she said.

During the pandemic, the federal stimulus bill categorized menstrual products as essential, allowing consumers to buy them with money from health savings and flexible savings accounts. That also led to change at the state level, Ms. Strausfeld said. Between 2020 and 2022, 10 more states eliminated their tampon taxes.

Last year, the retailer CVS agreed to pay tampon taxes on behalf of consumers in 10 of the states where they still stand. Other states do not allow vendors to pay sales taxes. The company also dropped the prices of CVS-brand period products by 25 percent across its stores to help make them more accessible.

Almost all the remaining 21 states, except Idaho, have introduced bills to eliminate the tax.

Well

Seeking to Prevent Dementia With the MIND Diet

Healthy eating might help protect your brain, experts say, but other factors play in, too.

By ALICE CALLAHAN

EIKO OJALA

If you're concerned about developing dementia later in life, it's natural to wonder if you might be able to prevent it.

Experts have estimated that 40 percent of dementia cases worldwide might be prevented or delayed with certain modifiable factors, such as by prioritizing exercise and sleep and addressing health conditions like hearing loss or hypertension.

But a growing body of evidence suggests that diet may play a role in dementia prevention, too, said Puja Agarwal, a nutritional epidemiologist at the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

Dr. Agarwal's work has focused on evaluating how the Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay, or MIND diet, which highlights certain foods thought to protect the brain, might influence dementia risk.

The diet was first described in a 2015 study led by Martha Clare Morris, a nutritional epidemiologist at Rush University, who died in 2020.

Dr. Morris and her colleagues noted that in research studies, people who followed the DASH and Mediterranean diets — which prioritize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats — tended to have better cognition than those who did not. They also observed that specific foods such as leafy greens, berries, nuts and whole grains were associated with better brain health.

Using these findings, Dr. Morris and her team devised the MIND diet. Like the DASH and Mediterranean diets, it emphasizes whole grains, vegetables, nuts, beans, healthy fats and lean protein sources like poultry and fish; and it suggests limiting red and processed meats, cheese, sweets, fried foods and butter or margarine. The MIND diet is unique, however, in that it calls for at least six servings of leafy greens and two servings of berries each week.

In various studies that have tracked older adults' eating patterns across many years, researchers have found that those who adhere most closely to the diet tend to have slower rates of cognitive decline, reduced risks of dementia and fewer signs of Alzheimer's disease in their brains after death than those who don't.

Such results have been "promising," said Debora Melo van Lent, an assistant professor of population health sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. But these studies can't prove that the diet itself leads to better brain health. For that, she said, you'd need a clinical trial.

The first MIND diet clinical trial was published in The New England Journal of Medicine in August. In the three-year study, researchers instructed half of the 604 participants — aged 65 and up — to follow the diet and the other half to follow their typical diets. The participants were also counseled on reducing calories for weight loss.

However, the results were disappointing, said Dr. Hussein Yassine, an associate professor of neurology at the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California. The two groups had similar improvements on cognitive tests, and brain scans did not find major differences associated with cognitive decline.

Dr. Agarwal, who was one of the study's authors, said this may have been a result of the study's design and factors outside of the researchers' control. The group that followed their typical diet, for instance, ended up consuming many components of the MIND diet, and each group lost weight, which may have contributed to similar improvements in cognitive function.

The diet suggests beefing up brain defense with less red meat and more spinach and berries.

Eating patterns are complex and challenging to control, Dr. Agarwal said, noting that "it's not as black and white as a drug trial."

Still, Dr. Yassine said, while there were some issues with the trial's design, the MIND diet might benefit brain health, particularly if followed for many decades. But it will take better-designed trials to prove it, he said.

Plenty of existing evidence supports the idea that a healthy diet — high in vegetables and healthy fats and limited in added sugars, processed foods and meats — can protect the brain, Dr. Yassine said, even if the jury is still out on whether the MIND diet can prevent dementia.

One clinical trial from 2013, for example, showed that the Mediterranean diet improved cognition, Dr. Melo van Lent said. And because diabetes and cardiovascular disease are major risk factors for dementia, she added, any dietary pattern that reduces those risks will also probably benefit your brain.

If you want to eat in a way that aligns with the MIND diet, consider adding berries to your breakfast or leafy greens like spinach or kale to your lunch a few times per week, and prioritize plant-based meals that incorporate beans and nuts, said Kelli McGrane, a registered dietitian and the author of "MIND Diet for Beginners," a cookbook and guide to the diet.

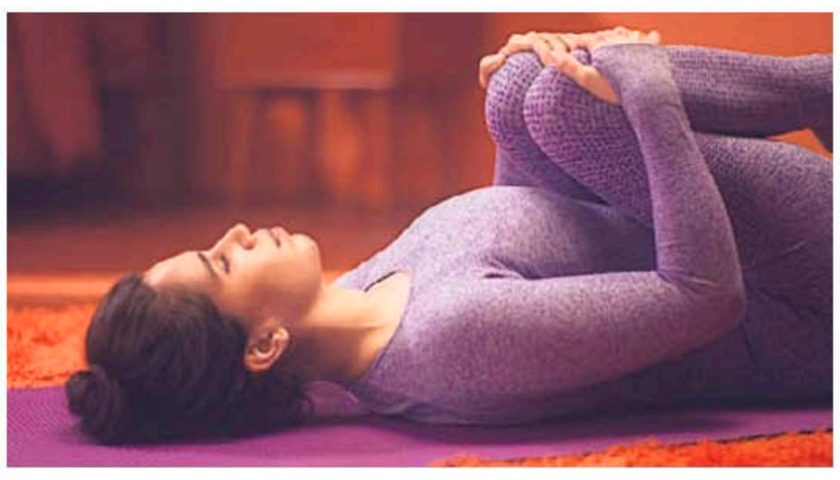
For the greatest brain benefits, form healthy lifestyle habits early on in life, "decades before the neurons of the brain cells start to die," Dr. Yassine said. Beyond nutrition, that means getting enough sleep and exercise, avoiding smoking, managing stress, prioritizing your mental health and staying socially engaged.

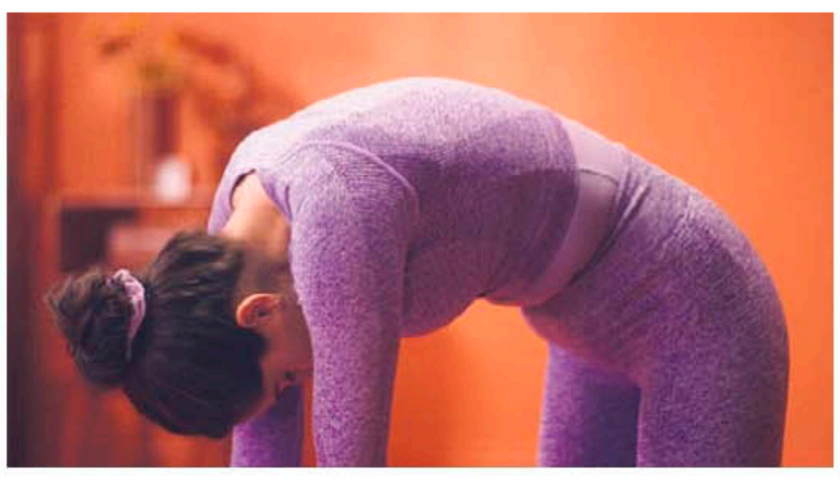
"Diet has a central role," Dr. Yassine said, "but it's embedded within a bigger picture."

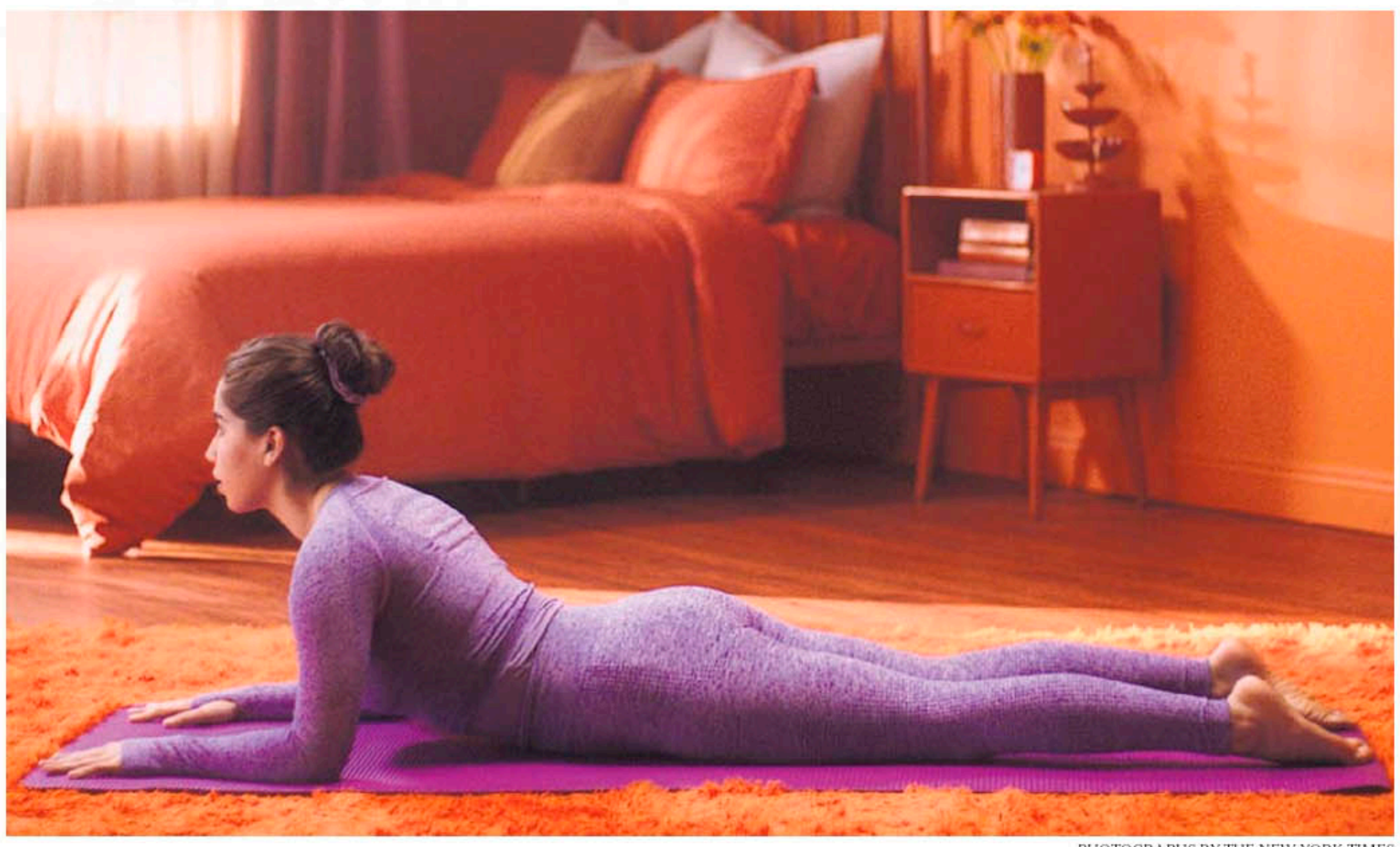
Five Minutes of Easy Yoga Poses to Start Your Day

Gentle stretching movement linked to breathing can awaken and energize.

By MELINDA WENNER MOYER







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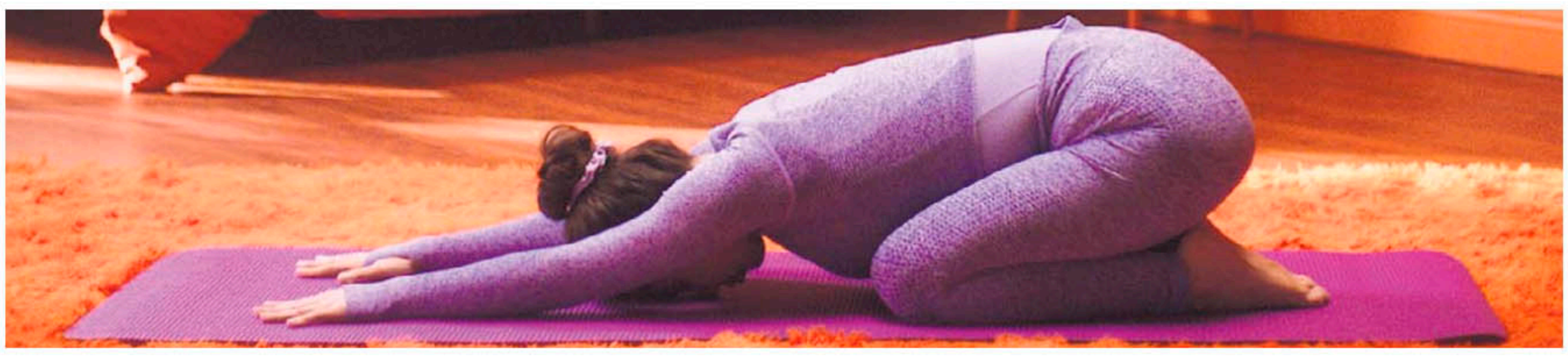
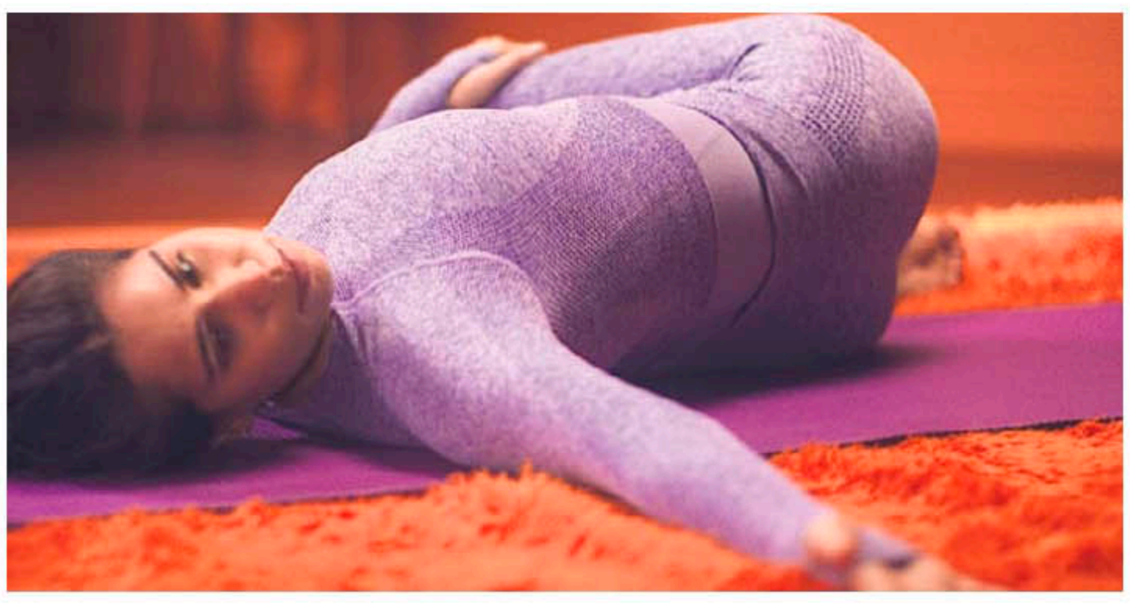
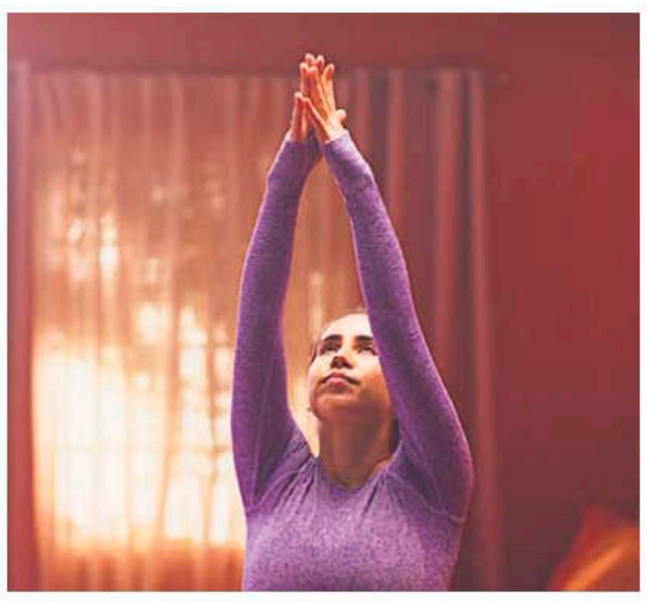


Start with: top left, knees to chest; above, half cobra; above left, alternating cat-cow; and left, child's pose.





Above from left: reclining twist, spinal flex and upward salute.

The last thing many people want to do when they wake up is exercise. But if you're not in the mood for a run or a trip to the gym, yoga is a good way to get moving, and you can do it in as little as five minutes.

Yoga can help "to wake up your body and get it ready for the day," said Neha Gothe, the director of the Exercise Psychology Lab at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The right poses can stretch the major muscle groups and warm up the joints, while slow breathing promotes focus and can reduce stress and anxiety. No equipment or even sweating is required.

If possible, start your morning yoga routine right after you wake up — and ideally before you reach for your phone, said Laura Schmalzl, a neuroscientist and certified yoga instructor at the Southern California University of Health Sciences.

Begin with slow, gentle movements. Listen to how your body feels, releasing any poses that cause discomfort.

As you hold positions and move through sequences, try "box" breathing, suggested Dr. Natalie Nevins, a family medicine physician and an assistant dean at the Western University of Health Sciences. Inhale for around four seconds, then hold your breath for four seconds, exhale for four seconds and hold your breath again for four seconds before repeating the cycle.

If you have a heart condition, or are uncomfortable holding your breath, Dr. Nevins recommended a simple series of five-second inhales, each immediately followed by a five-second exhale.

Here is a yoga routine recommended by experts to get your day going.

KNEES-TO-CHEST Start by lying on your back and hugging your knees to your chest. You should feel a gentle stretch in the spine. Breathe in and out through the stretch.

HALF COBRA Release your legs and roll onto your chest, allowing your forehead or cheek to rest on the floor. Rest your forearms and place your palms on the ground, directly under your shoulders, while keeping your bent elbows tight against your sides.

Then gently push away from the floor, lifting your chest and forehead. Feel your spine gently stretch as you continue to slowly breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Stay here for three breaths.

ALTERNATING CAT-COW This pose is useful to encourage spine mobility and flexibility. Rise to a kneeling tabletop position, keeping your hands shoulder-width apart and your knees hip-distance apart directly under your hips.

On the inhale, arch your back into a cow pose, easing your belly toward the floor, and bringing your head and chest upward so you are gazing toward the sky as you inhale. Then exhale, releasing your breath and pulling your belly up and in and rounding your back into a cat pose.

Alternate between these two poses, feeling your spine and neck stretch in both directions. Feel free to gently move your hips, shoulders or head in a circular motion, breathing slowly as you do.

CHILD'S POSE This is a gentle pose that stretches the spine. It's also a pose you can return to if you need to rest or reset.

From the tabletop position, inhale and touch your big toes together behind you. Then sit on your heels, letting your knees open wide to create space beneath you. Or keep your knees together, if that feels more comfortable.

As you exhale, shift your hips back and your upper body forward, lowering your torso to rest between or on top of your thighs. If your knees are together and you feel a pinch in your hips, spread your knees apart. Stretch your arms out in front of you, reaching as far forward as feels good, and then rest your forearms on the floor.

Let gravity pull you deeper into the pose. You may feel a stretch in your spine, thighs, arms and buttocks. Stay in this pose for five breaths.

RECLINING TWIST Start by lying down on your back and bringing your knees up toward your chest.

Hug your knees and place your right hand on your left knee. Let your left arm lie flat, extended on the floor beside you. Twisting from your core, exhale and gently guide your bent legs to fall together to the right side of your body.

Bring your knees toward the floor until you feel a stretch in your back and hips. Then turn your head to look toward your left hand. On an inhale, come back to the center before switching to the other side.

You may feel a gentle stretching in your hips, buttocks and back and an opening in your shoulders and chest. If you wish to target the upper spine or you want a gentler stretch, you can lie on your right side with your legs bent and resting on top of each other. Then slowly twist your upper body to the left. After that, stretch the other side.

SPINAL FLEX This gentle back stretch is especially good for people who spend all day sitting at a desk. Sit down on the floor in a cross-legged position and place your hands on your ankles or knees. While inhaling, gently arch your back and lift your chest and chin forward and up. Relax, and while exhaling, round your spine, bending forward slightly and tucking your chin toward your chest. Repeat this sequence five times.

UPWARD SALUTE Stand with your feet hip distance apart. Feel your feet connecting with the floor, and shift your hips forward slightly, engaging your core. Slowly raise your arms overhead and in line with your ears, shoulder distance apart. Turn your palms toward each other and, if you can, let them touch. Bring your gaze up to your hands and feel a stretch in your neck and arms.

Raise yourself up onto your toes. Find your center as you take several breaths. When you're ready, slowly lower your arms and the rest of your body to release the pose. Take a few moments to shake out your arms and legs.